



A COUNCIL OF WAR IN THE DUTCH FLEET, 1665.
From a pen and ink drawing by Willem Van de Velde the Younger.



DUTCH FLAGSHIPS CLOSE INSHORE, by VAN DE VELDE THE ELDER.

L'ucain. Jour.



THE BATTLE OF THE TEXEL, 1673, by VAN DE VELDE THE YOUNGER.



THE BATTLE OF VIGO BAY, 1702, by LUDOLF BAKHUIZEN.



COMMODORE CHARLES WAGER'S CAPTURE OF A SPANISH GALLEON,
28th May, 1708.

From the oil painting by Samuel Scott (1700 ?-1772).

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H.M.S. *BRITANNIA*, 1692, by ISAAC SAILMAKER.



THE ROYAL SOVEREIGN
BY VAN DE VELDE THE YOUNGER,
NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM.

OLD SEA PAINTINGS

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

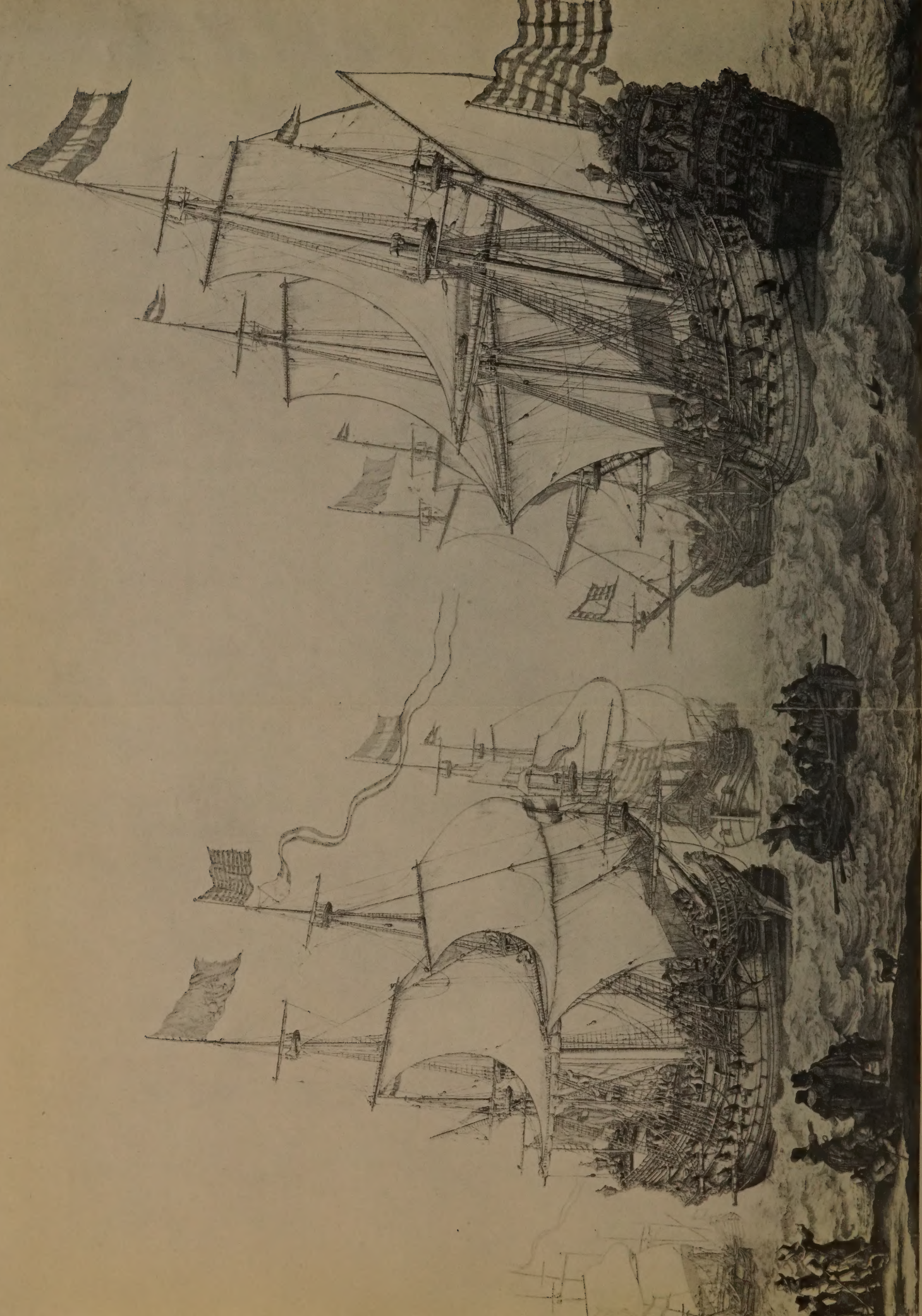
SAILING SHIPS AND THEIR STORY
SHIPS AND WAYS OF OTHER DAYS
FORE AND AFT: THE STORY OF THE FORE
AND AFT RIG
THE STORY OF THE BRITISH NAVY
KING'S CUTTERS AND SMUGGLERS
STEAMSHIPS AND THEIR STORY
THE ROMANCE OF THE SHIP
THE ROMANCE OF PIRACY
THE OLD EAST INDIAMEN
Q SHIPS AND THEIR STORY
THE ROMANCE OF SEA ROVERS
THE MERCANTILE MARINE
THE AUXILIARY PATROL
SHIP MODELS
WHALERS AND WHALING
CHATS ON NAVAL PRINTS
THE SHIP UNDER SAIL
STEAMSHIP MODELS
BATTLES BY SEA
SEAMEN ALL
WINDJAMMERS AND SHELLBACKS
THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE SEA
CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH
OLD SHIP PRINTS
VENTURES AND VOYAGES

CRUISES

DOWN CHANNEL IN THE *VIVETTE*
THROUGH HOLLAND IN THE *VIVETTE*

IN PREPARATION

THE MARINE WATER-COLOUR PAINTERS AND
THEIR PICTURES



DUTCH MEN-OF-WAR. GRISAILLE BY VAN DE VELDE THE ELDER (see page 41).



H.M.S. BRITANNIA. *By an unidentified
Nineteenth Century artist. (See page 168).*

OLD SEA PAINTINGS

The Story of Maritime Art as
depicted by the Great Masters

BY

E. KEBLE CHATTERTON

WITH FIFTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS IN COLOUR
AND NINETY-FIVE IN BLACK AND WHITE
MAINLY FROM THE MACPHERSON COLLECTION

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PREFACE

WHEN we think of those two exquisite arts of painting and seafaring, we wonder why it is that in a world full of artistic productions there have been comparatively few marine pictures. It is still more surprising to find that even in countries whose rise to prosperity has been because of the sea and ships, this neglect is still existent.

It has for many years been my aim to offer such a volume as the present, for I have never been able to discover in the English language any book which traces the beginnings, the rise, and growth of marine painting from the earliest times down to the late nineteenth century. Even among foreign publications I could find but one, which appeared some years before the Great War, nor did this book attempt to cover the same ground as in the following chapters. It is my hope that this consecutive account of sea and ship interpretation, as seen in the works of the greatest practitioners, may be not merely useful to collectors and students, but a source of æsthetic pleasure to all who love ships and the beauty of their expression.

In my previous book, *Old Ship Prints*, to which this is a companion, I dealt with a different art. My present object is to show when and how and why, under what difficulties or encouragement, those who went down to see ships have depicted such illustrations as have survived. Two of these pictures have been reproduced from manuscripts in the British Museum, but the rest have been selected from that unique collection made by the enthusiasm and

enterprise of Mr. A. G. H. Macpherson ; and to his courtesy as well as his assistance I desire to render every acknowledgment. It is a matter for congratulation that since these chapters were written the collection has been acquired for the nation.

The glories of Holland and of Great Britain are non-existent if they were not concerned with the sea and ships. These achievements afloat would have had no permanent pictorial expression but for the great master artists who existed as contemporaries. Thus we shall find the rise of sea-power and of marine painting side by side.

Apart from consulting such useful reference works as Bryan's *Dictionary of Painters*, Bénézit's *Dictionnaire Critique*, and Pilkington's *Dictionary of Painters*, I have found data in C. Hofstede de Groot's *Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the most eminent Dutch Painters of the Seventeenth Century* ; Henry Havard's *The Dutch School of Painting* ; Edward T. Cook's handbooks to the National Gallery and the Tate Collection ; Virgil Baker's monograph on *Pieter Bruegel the Elder* ; Sir Martin Conway's *Early Flemish Artists* ; and the volumes of the *Mariner's Mirror*. For the rest I have relied chiefly on my own researches both at home and in Holland.

E. KEBLE CHATTERTON.

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NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM



SHIPS BECALMED IN THE SOLENT

by Charles Brooking (1723-1759)

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NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM



THE "RESOLUTION," 1667

Van de Velde the Younger

OLD SEA PAINTINGS

NATIONAL GALLERY

CARD No. 1115



VAN DE VELDE

COAST SCENE: CALM (871)

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE art of representing nautical subjects on a flat surface by means of colour pigments is of all techniques the most highly technical ; for the painter of sea pictures must satisfy not merely the lover of beautiful things but that stern critic the seaman. Therefore, apart from any æsthetic endowment, it is first necessary that the marine artist must know the way of a ship on the ocean as well as on the Narrow Seas, must have been through storms and sunshine, gales and calms ; else otherwise he is essaying a task with imperfect knowledge of character and circumstance.

It is for this reason that the most satisfying pictures of ships and the sea have been created either by professional mariners, or by those who have gone afloat in yachts, or have deliberately set out over and over again in all weathers and in all manner of craft, whensoever local fishing vessels, warships, or foreign-bound merchant vessels could be found to take them. Of these classes it is easy enough to afford examples. Immediately one thinks of Nicholas Pocock and of Dominique Serres, both of whom served in trading ships before devoting themselves to painting. One calls to mind the great Van de Velde sketching naval battles from a Dutch yacht. One remembers that Ludolf Backhuysen, who taught Peter the Great how to draw, used to hire those seventeenth-century Dutch fishermen to take him out to sea in the worst weather in order that he might study accurately the forms of waves and the

behaviour of shipping. Without such painstaking care and attention, indeed, it is well-nigh impossible for a marine painting to be little more than a mass of inaccuracy and incongruity.

In these modern days of standardized steamships the sphere of error is certainly less extensive, though even now the landsman gives himself away because he lacks a perfect knowledge of ship anatomy. I can call to remembrance two recent cases. In the first was a distinguished painter, well known for his colouring and composition, whose works have been admired in public galleries. For a brief but unfortunate period he suddenly devoted himself to depicting men-of-war. The general effect to the uncritical intelligence was pleasing, the atmosphere and sunlight were delightful; but instantly there leapt to the sailor's eye not one but several items which proved that there was neither sympathy with, nor understanding of, naval architecture. The sweep of a ship's lines, the rake of her funnels, the tapering of her masts, the curve of her bows have to filter through an imagination properly trained before they can be set down in oils or pencil. In the second example a fashionable artist, famous for his portraits of pretty women, endeavoured to paint steel ships, yet with such painful results that his own conscience must have been sorely troubled had he listened to the remarks of naval officers accustomed to cruise in company of these ships. But some of the most successful novelists and poets have erred just as badly when they have attempted to write of seafaring matters. I once heard a Prime Minister remark that the difference between his profession and that of seafaring was this: in the latter there was no room for insincerity and humbug. Is it not true, also, with regard to the representation of sea subjects in art or literature?

During the sailing-ship age, with all its canvas and cordage, it was impossible for any fake marine artist to attain convincing

success. The detail of rigging, the cut and set of sails, the angle of spars, the position of ships cruising or fighting in company, are too much the work of experts to allow interference by others. That is why one sees, among the attempts by those who dared to invade where true sea-painters feared to experiment, ships sailing on impossible courses with the same wind, ships firing across each other in historically incorrect situations, ships manœuvring at such close quarters that collisions would be inevitable and courts-martial a foregone conclusion. It is only when the incomplete marine artist addresses himself to mere seascapes, with perhaps a boat and fishermen on the shore, that he is just within the margin of safety and can win a certain amount of approval.

But this is a part, and not the whole, of our subject. Just as in modern literature Conrad by long years as a mariner learnt to understand, and later, to interpret the character of the sea in all its varying moods, together with its influence on human personality, so in our search for the perfect marine painter we look for an artist who can show us the vividness of movement in ships and seas, the surge and rush of waters, the reaction of hull and sail to wave and wind. The effect can be dramatic but not stagey, the vessels can be full of colour but not pieces of illuminated cardboard ; and if there are figures of sailormen they must have verisimilitude and not appear as dressed-up poseurs standing in studied attitudes, candidates for gallery applause.

In different ages painters have approached marine matters with quite different prejudices, and it is part of our task in the following chapters to trace this disposition which became altered for the reason that the use of ships in the service of man became feared, respected, despised, or wholly relied upon. No two persons perceive the same thing in quite the same manner, or from the same angle ; and this consideration will be found most marked

when we proceed to witness how curiously ships have presented themselves to men of even the same locality. Sea painting is one of the last forms of art to be developed, yet its relation to social and national life is most intimate ; and, as every year passes by, we realize that but for these contemporary pictures we could not adequately and completely reconstruct the ships and seafaring scenes of the past. To-day there is a young and virile school of naval archæology intent on finding out every detail belonging to the past history of ship life ; yet, without the assistance of the great marine artists who have left us so much information, the field of research would be confined.

We can, as a general statement, decide that when some pot-boiling early Victorian Academician in a generation one whole century after the event paints a famous naval engagement, that picture (whatever its virtues) is to be treated with the utmost suspicion. But when the Dutch artists of the seventeenth century painted battles of the Anglo-Dutch wars they were setting down in oil historical facts which were of common knowledge, and portraying for posterity vessels which were familiar to the artists' eyes. There is no humbug about this kind of enterprise, and we can look with confidence into the rigging, the flags, the lead of the ropes, the groups of men handling sails or contesting with cannonades. As we examine the meticulous care with which the younger Van de Velde placed every gun, every shroud, stay, brace, sheet, mast, and sail ; or observe how studied was his endeavour to set forth for our enjoyment every bit of decoration adorning those handsome high sterns of seventeenth-century capital ships, with the crews climbing aloft or bringing parties alongside in open boats ready with boathooks, we begin to feel that we are part of the picture and belong to Van de Velde's very period. But it can be only a real technician in art or literature who is capable of transporting us from

our own immediate environment to that which he aims at representing.

To us who are familiar with travel by sea, maritime trade, and naval warfare, it seems passing strange that for so long a time there was no such thing as marine painting, and that artists for their subjects rarely selected aught but human figures. Even when the landscape ceased to be used merely as background but became a picture in itself, concentrating on the beauties of flowers and brooks, trees and mountains, blossoms and birds, it did not at first occur to the painter that the sea and its vessels were worthy of being treated as principals rather than accidents. It was only when the world began to be revealed through voyaging, and the human mind had been opened by the Renaissance, that artists suddenly awoke to find a new theme which had been waiting that long while to be expressed. The spirit of inquiry, the forsaking of narrow conventions, the return of men and ships after months and years of voyaging in unknown seas, created a new school of expression, something quite different from bare topography or cold relation of plain facts.

Hitherto the sea, like death, was one of those great realities at the back of men's minds, which had to be accepted as inevitable, but need not be brought into prominence as a painful reminder. Especially to inland people (who had never seen the sea), with their own domestic and national troubles, the picture of a ship was unlikely to arouse any emotion except horror. The time, however, would surely come when the merchants of Venice and Holland, having gained their riches through shipping, would desire to give encouragement to those few artists who understood marine matters. Still, it was not without an interval of considerable length that painters began to get deep down into the sea's secrets, its mysterious and complex character, its majesty and immensity. This could be comprehended only by living the mariner's life, by narrowly

escaping shipwreck, by voyaging under every condition of winds, waves, and atmosphere. Then, gradually, the tremendous possibilities of pictorial expression were discovered; the grandeur of storms and the simple restfulness of shipping anchored in an August calm appeared alike fit themes to be treated in oil. And next, as the utility of sailing vessels both for trade and war was emphasized during the seventeenth and succeeding centuries, there came a demand for those comparatively few artists who specialized in sea pictures. The rise of great mercantile navies, the clashing of fighting navies, and the exploration of new countries continued and expanded the art of sea painting till the latter part of the nineteenth century, when the long years of peace, the prosperity of trade, and the climax of the sailing ship's progress all combined to give the marine artist a unique position.

Thus we shall find in the following pictures pure sea art at first struggling for its freedom, then bursting forth with a spring-like freshness of effort, then becoming too mechanical and stereotyped in an age that suffered from convention, but finally thrusting aside narrow hard rules and beginning a new life untrammelled by tradition yet actuated by a clear active conscience. Just as a strong personality may endanger the characters of weaker people by making of them mere copyists, so for a period it was with the sea painters who became such unquestioned masters that their technique rather than their spirit was followed. English artists of the eighteenth century would paint in a certain style just because certain eminent Dutch artists of the seventeenth had been successful along those lines. Thus there followed endless "Shipping in Calm," "Storm at Sea," "Coast Scene," and many another repeated item until artists once more evolved their own personal methods and again painted as they saw. Laziness, lack of artistic energy, indifferent imagination, fear of originality were the basic

faults of a bad intervening period ; so that we find “ fashionable ” painters with no nautical knowledge perpetrating large-size canvases to cover vast areas of wall in pompous palaces. Nor can the claim that these subjects are “ historical ” endure to-day the light of investigation shed by real knowledge of the actual facts.

In the approach to our study we must, then, make quite certain of our standards whence we are to judge and appreciate. To some simple untravelled inhabitant of the North Sea littoral marine painting suggested nothing more subtle than a tide-washed beach with a few figures hauling or launching a boat. Call them “ Smugglers ” or “ Fishermen coming Ashore ” if you will, but there is no poetry or mysticism in this restful bit of seascape, and there is little but the colouring to arouse the emotions. Still, it pleases, and such painters as Morland can therefore almost claim to belong to our category. There are others, such as Turner and his school who get out of the sea both drama and realism, even melodrama and pathetic cruelty. Those awe-inspiring aspects of the sailor’s life, where bluff-bowed beamy vessels of Netherlandish build are wallowing in pea-green seas on the verge of shipwreck ; those terrible black squalls overcoming fishermen toiling in white-crested seas, and cutters barely stemming the tide as they approach Calais piers ; those sad-looking hulks, too, lying broken and battered, all belong to a pre-steam period, when the sea was still regarded as utterly unsafe and unable to be cheated by science. But to other artists it is the beauty and bravery of the ship in her toil with imperious nature, dramatic but not melodramatic, struggling yet not hopelessly ; or with the sun glinting on her spars and sails, whilst the stately hull rises and falls to the ocean swell ; that make their appeal to be painted. And, finally, come those later developments where the artist is attracted not by ships but solely by the character of waves.

All art is essentially a paraphrase, therefore liable to exaggeration and over stress. But howsoever the artist reacts to his subject—whether it is the majesty, the grandeur, the mysticism, the beauty, or the restful placid calmness of a fleeting moment—we ask only that the pictorial production shall not be lacking in truth; that there shall be no sickly sea sentimentality, and that wherever the ship is treated she shall be regarded as in a character-portrait, a sentient being with expressive features and reasonable life-like attributes. That which we cannot tolerate is a mass of meaningless rigging and unusable sails set in a hull which no mariner would ever take to sea.

The basis of selection here offered may be explained in the fewest words. I believe that hitherto no such volume has appeared having for its scope the exclusive inquiry into the origin and development of marine painting; though it is not a little remarkable that such an hiatus should so long have existed. My object is to show pictorially how this art has been accomplished by the best masters of their respective periods. The public galleries of England contain a few Van der Velde, Ruysdaels, Monamys, Backhuysens, Breughels, Capelles, as well as representatives of the English school of sea painters. But it is by no means possible to find outside the Macpherson Collection a gallery of pictures affording a more or less consecutive presentation of the subject. Especially is this true in regard to the early artists. Thanks to the courtesy of Mr. A. G. H. Macpherson, I am able to put before the lover of art a unique set of illustrations which, in one volume, will give the story of a most interesting aspect of artistic history. Some of the pictures herein produced have been specially purchased in order that no important gaps in our study may seem to appear. Certain of these examples will come as a surprise even to connoisseurs, and I have deliberately refrained from drawing on the National and other well-

known galleries for the reason that the latter are so generally accessible that the items are fairly well known. For that reason the exclusion of any Turners or Clarkson Stanfields, Cooke, David Cox, Cotman, and others is justified : they are already familiar by many reproductions. Such artists as George Morland have been omitted for the reason that it is only by the widest use of the term that they could be called “ marine ” painters. Otherwise it will be noticed that the selection here is as wide as possible, and as varied, having regard to the dates as well as the necessary limitation of numbers.

Whilst British galleries are curiously lacking in examples by the great sea masters, the museums of Holland are richly crowded ; and he who would desire full knowledge of this fascinating art section must necessarily begin with the collections which are to be seen in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, the Hague, Dordrecht, Middleburg, and so on. The material here set forth is the result partly of wanderings through Holland (usually by yacht) and making detailed studies of every available ship picture during repeated visits ; and partly of some twenty years’ devotion to this subject. The appearance of my *Old Ship Prints* a year ago proved—what was well known already—that to-day there is a real interest being taken in the artistic representations of bygone ships : for the number of letters from readers was quite remarkable. It is not suggested that one person in a hundred nowadays can or will afford to purchase sea paintings, but I hope that this volume may enable collectors and art lovers to learn just how their own individual fancies are related to the great scheme of sea pictures throughout the ages. Those who find pleasure in carefully examining the progress of ship development will discover in the following pictures many details worthy of consideration. Artists and students of naval archæology may find it convenient to have this pictorial story

in consecutive form, and be saved the annoyance of wasting time searching for reliable contemporary marine paintings. In one form or another we find ships being used by designers far more frequently than before the Great War. In the past it was customary to forgive the flagrant inaccuracies, but to-day with greater knowledge such liberties are not easily tolerated: the reproducer in metal, oils, water-colours, or black-and-white is required to cause even a mediæval vessel to resemble a ship and not a freak. One of the worst examples of misinformed art is still to be seen outside the offices of a wealthy shipping company. A well-intentioned but wholly incorrectly rigged sailing craft does little to adorn the exterior of that building. No ship lover can observe this impossible effort without a shudder, and the cumulative effect of seeing such an offensive decorative advertisement often is that one would prefer to travel by any other company's line of steamers.

One notices the same foolish negligence in cinematograph pictures. One of the biggest, and certainly most expensive, attempts to express eighteenth-century ship life on the screen lost all sense of reality simply because silly mistakes were made in regard to a few details. Thousands of pounds had been spent in reconstructing vessels and scenes, but the smallest percentage expended in acquiring knowledge as to certain details would have prevented anachronisms as well as other mistakes.

To investigators for truth the paintings here shown in colour and half-tone may be the means of right guidance. From the work of Van de Velde, when he set out to give with marvellous patience every conceivable item of a Dutch warship's gear, we can, for instance, gain the most perfect and unquestioned information. No perishable ship model—and more than likely re-rigged wrongly by some eighteenth-century vandal—could tell us such complete information as we can discover from that picture *en*

grisaille to be found in a later chapter. At the same time it must be admitted as a warning that the hands of the wicked have not been stayed from meddling with pictures as well.

There is the well-known instance of Velasquez' "A Wild Boar Hunt," which hangs in the London National Gallery and was purchased in 1846. One critic stated that it had been damaged in cleaning, but Ruskin stated on the contrary, "I have seldom met with an example of the master which gave me more delight, or which I believed to be in more genuine or perfect condition." However, in 1853 Ruskin was proved to be wrong, when the Select Committee on the National Gallery established the fact that a great part of the canvas had been painted by George Lance, the still-life artist, who lived from 1802 till 1864. For Lord Cowley, at one time owner of this picture, had sent this Velasquez to a picture-dealer in order to be relined, and the dealer had the misfortune to damage it by using a too hot iron. What was to be done in this terrible predicament? Finally, almost driven mad by worry, the dealer received the assistance of Lance, who painted in the missing portions as he *imagined* Velasquez would have done. That is to say, two hundred years after the great Spanish master was dead! The picture went back in due course to Lord Cowley and was accepted without question, Lance's secret for years being well kept.

In the history of art such cases are not isolated, but the magnitude of the sin is that some later artist should tinker with details whilst mentally ill-equipped. The reader will find sometimes that ignorant "correctors" have the impertinence to "improve" on genuine sea paintings by altering flags, or even sails, so as to bring them in accord with what these modern people *imagined* must have been right. I have here reproduced two instances of these partial fakes. Why have meddlers been so guilty? The answer is that

they were probably so anxious to sell a genuine seventeenth-century picture of ships that they must necessarily put in a gaff, instead of the old lateen yard, merely to satisfy some early nineteenth-century buyer who was not aware of the exact rig two hundred years previously. The result is to create chaos when on a correct hull of a certain period a great glaring inaccuracy as to spars and sail manifests itself.

But those wicked days are happily past; so much has since been published by historical experts following long research, that he would be the most foolish of fakers who should attempt to paint-in any damaged or doubtful portion of a ship's anatomy. Let us, then, proceed to watch the genuine marine artists as they worked away, sometimes with all too little encouragement, to leave for our enjoyment those ships which they saw with their own eyes, and that we would give our very eyes now to see.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST MARINE PAINTERS

IN other volumes I have shown that it is the Nile ships of the Dynastic periods which afford us the first evidence in the history of sailing craft. But it is from Egypt, too, that painting (the youngest of all arts) has its beginning. The earliest marine painters depicted on amphora or wall those interesting squaresail and beautifully curved ships with steering oar, lowering mast, and numerous details so interesting and intelligible to any nautical student. Of course, this Egyptian painting was crude, conventional, and without perspective. For thousands of years the Nile artists were accustomed to depict standing water as a strip of blue with zig-zag black lines : but for all that the sailing vessels on the wall paintings in the Temple of Deir-el-Bahari are full of character. If the water at first sight might seem to be anything at all, from mat-work to some woven fabric, the further convention of swimming fish soon sets our mind at rest.

The origins of Greek painting are lost in obscurity, but vase painting is traceable from pre-Homeric days down to its expiration in the second century before Christ. As an art Greek painting did not attain a perfection equal with sculpture, owing partly to limited knowledge in regard to available pigments : yet it would have been strange if we had not been left some sort of painting showing the native sea-going vessels that helped to make Grecian history. Actually both war galley and sailing merchantmen of about the date

500 B.C. are preserved to us on a painted Greek vase in the British Museum. Here again the details of ships, of sails, and rigging are most informative ; yet the sea is thoroughly conventional and with no more character than the furrows of a ploughed field. The unearthing of mosaics near Tunis in our own generation has indeed given us illustrations of different sea-going vessels belonging to about A.D. 200, yet these are ship pictures rather than marine paintings, and the sea itself has not been thought worthy by the artist of any study whatsoever.

The burial place of the primitive Christians was the birthplace of Christian art ; but whilst the development of painting was dependent on the spread of Christianity, it was at first of antique art merely an echo. Gradually the Christian religion gave a new life to painting, yet as a general rule mediæval artists did their best to avoid expressing either ships or the sea, though at times they were compelled by circumstances to face nautical facts. Thus any Scriptural incident connected with the Sea of Galilee, or some votive picture commemorating the deliverance from shipwreck which had to be painted to the order of a thankful wealthy merchant, necessitated a study of ships afloat. Some artists painted ships on glass, but we shall always find such vessels quaint rather than accurate ; and the art of glass painting dates only from the eleventh century of our era. In Italy the mosaicists did not always ignore ships, and some mosaics in St. Mark's, Venice, assist us to understand fourteenth-century craft.

But from about the year 1250 to 1400 mediæval art became under French influence, and certainly until about 1350 England, Germany, Spain, and the Netherlands were dependent on the French school of painting. It is from this stage that our subject of sea pictures becomes of such vital interest, and we must needs trace it under the two separate categories of (*a*) illuminated

manuscripts, (*b*) paintings on wood or canvas. Let us not fail to understand that the aim of the twelfth-, thirteenth-, and fourteenth-century artists was rather to present ideas and suggest thoughts in the beholder's mind. The presentation of facts was definitely not the primary object, for in mediæval times facts were few when once outside the sphere of religion. Such subjects as the Nativity, the Flight into Egypt, the Crucifixion and Resurrection of our Lord, were painted over and over again, not merely as the expression of devotion, not merely for the decoration of churches, but because beyond these simple fundamental stories the artist knew little or nothing. He was unread and untravelled, and therefore ignorant. Except for those who lived at such busy ports as Antwerp in northern Europe, or Venice in southern, scarcely an artist had ever seen such an incomprehensible problem as the ship: therefore, when the time did come for him to show a vessel on the sea, what could he effect?

The answer is that he sought some one who could sketch for him a more or less crescent-shaped hull with sometimes one but at other times two or three masts, and yards on which to set square-sails. Sometimes, also, the information was more detailed and complete, including such items as the rows of reef-points; but otherwise there came into use among those artists, not nautically experienced, a conventional standardized ship which was passed on through studio after studio from one generation to another with merely slight modifications and a persistence that can be compared only with that of Britannia seated on our bronze pennies. But it is in the wonderful miniatures of illuminated manuscripts that we get the first germs of north European ship painting that preceded the coming of the great sea pictures of a much later date, and to this section we must forthwith fully address ourselves. Now the first quarter of the fourteenth century was, in the history of English

illumination, the beginning of achievement ; and collaterally (thanks largely to the Crusades) a slightly increased familiarity with ships had already been obtained. Thus it is that we begin to find sea-faring items having their place in these illuminated manuscripts. There is, for example, the design of a shipwright building a craft to be observed in an early fourteenth-century English Psalter which is preserved in the British Museum (Brit. Mus. Roy. 2 B VII). It is one of the earliest evidences we have of the English artistic mind losing its shyness towards the sea.

In France, however, this same fourteenth century was a period of consistent advance with regard to the technique of manuscript illumination. The latter became vitalized and developed so that by the commencement of the following century the production of illuminated manuscripts had in that country reached the position of a staple trade. In particular were Books of Hours produced in vast numbers for wealthy patrons and for booksellers too. Some of these volumes very fortunately have survived the dangers of vandals, accidental fire, and negligent use. Not all these vellum creations show ships, but we can get an excellent knowledge if we select the following, which still are available in northern Europe.

In the Bibliothèque Nationale is a *Livre de Merveille* (MS. Français 2810) containing miniatures of the late fourteenth century representing Crusading ships rigged each with a single square sail and bound for the Holy Land. But we need go no further than the British Museum to find some delightful efforts of that same period, which show a French artist's best effort at interpreting actual marine incidents. In Harleian MS. 1319 we have a French volume written on parchment by a French hand and entitled *Histoire du Roy d'Angleterre Richard II*. It begins on April 25, 1399, when the author accompanied a Gascoigne Knight from Paris to London. The object of the journey was to attend on

Richard II, but the latter had recently gone over to Ireland, there to subdue a famous rebel. This little book, which is written in verse, contains sixteen coloured miniatures, which are extremely valuable for their information as to the dress and finished portraits of contemporary persons. Even in that uncritical year of 1808 an English critic so fully appreciated this fact that he remarked these particular miniatures "might have been of good use to Seignr. Antonio Verrio in his representing the triumphant Entry of Edward the Black Prince (in St. George's Hall at Windsor Castle) & have prevented his arming & dressing our English People à la Romaine." Antonio Verrio, whose period is covered by the dates 1639-1707, will be mentioned in a later chapter.

But chiefly are we concerned with the illustrations that show nautical life. King Richard's army, having been reduced whilst in Ireland to great hardships through lack of provisions, was at length relieved by the arrival of three ships from England, and this incident is depicted on folio 7 B. The three ships are still quite conventional, each having its single squaresail stowed to the yard, and only two men are seen aboard each vessel. There is no perspective, little regard for proportion, no background except of a negative pattern; but there is a certain effort to lend reality to the sea itself. Still, the artist has endeavoured to give here not a well-established fact; but a particular isolated event. He paints the soldiers running into the water for eagerness to receive from the ships bread of which they had not tasted for five days; whilst ashore the army tents look out on to these anchored and welcome vessels. The reds, blues, greens, and whites which compose this primitive marine picture are by no means unpleasing.

Still more appealing is the second of these miniatures on folio 14 B. Here we are to understand that Richard has despatched from Ireland the Earl of Salisbury, who is seen to arrive at Conway

in Wales. One may smile at the composition and lack of proportion, but here again we are more than attracted. The craft are still of the single squaresail type, and one of them is steered so close to a turret of Conway Castle that her starboard yardarm will inevitably foul the masonry. The ship rigging is not convincing, yet the French artist has given a certain life and actuality to the sails, and there is a mild attempt at wave painting. By some curious convention the castle is painted pink, the roofs being of a geranium red. There is yet a third miniature at folio 18, where Richard is seen with his four similar ships crossing from Ireland to Wales: yet the vessels have been placed in such proximity that no helmsmen could have avoided serious collisions. But the hooded costume of the sailors and other details make this, and its two companion pictures, of perennial value if we desire to regard seafaring as it was beheld at the end of the fourteenth century.

Hitherto we have considered pictures which have no marine background and only a slight suggestion of any ship environment; almost as if we were to look at vessels sailing on a white or decorated sheet. But by the year 1416 or 1417 an exquisite miniature comes to break asunder such artificial restrictions. This unique and irreplaceable little masterpiece was in a manuscript preserved at Turin Library, though unfortunately it was destroyed by fire some twenty-eight years ago. It has, however, been reproduced by photography, so that we can still appreciate our great loss.* It formed one of the illustrations to *Les Très Belles Heures de Notre Dame*, and has been thought to be the work of no less a painter than the great Hubrecht van Eyck himself. I believe that herein we have the earliest pictorial evidence of the fore-and-aft rig in Northern Europe, for here we see an open boat with a sprit lugsail

* See a reproduction in *Die Niederlandische Marinemalerei*, by F. C. Willis, Leipzig, 1911.

just as Van Eyck was wont to see every day when he lived at Maaseyk on the Maas.

The subject is the voyage of St. Martha, with other figures, but of course these mediæval artists, not unnaturally, clothed old legends with fifteenth-century surroundings. Van Eyck, being himself the least conventional and the most independent of all his contemporary painters, preferred not to use some stereotyped ship such as had satisfied inland dwellers, but selected a typical craft such as sailed about the rivers and estuaries of the Low Countries: in other words, he forsook traditional insincerity and went straight to reality. This open boat running before the wind across a broad estuary is full of detailed truth. The ripply wavelets are the only features that fail entirely to convince, but against these must be stressed the charming introduction of distant hill scenery and high buildings. As in so many other of these illuminated manuscripts, the treatment shows an originality and unrestrained freedom that are ahead of anything we can find in the paintings of a larger scale. Into the wonderful and far-reaching effect of the van Eycks we shall look again presently; but it is not too much to claim that this Hour Book illumination is the first true marine picture (as distinct from mere ship paintings) of which we have any record. The book was done for Jean de France, Duc de Berry, and its importance with regard to the history of art makes its loss all the more regrettable.

But in the British Museum happily we possess a singularly beautiful early fifteenth-century vellum manuscript containing part of the *Croniques de Froissart*, finely written and gorgeously illuminated. Here is a feast of delight for all who have eyes and imagination. More beautiful than any costume play upon the modern stage, rich in pageantry and colour, thrilling the emotions by its grand displays, this Harleian MS. 4379, written for some

person of the blood royal of France, cannot be studied except with gratitude for sheer loveliness. Such scenes as the entry of Queen Ysabel into Paris and the marriage of Louis d'Anjou are inspirations to any art lover. But there are splendid jousts and tournaments, knights and ladies all well individualized, caparisoned horses, crowds and multi-coloured tapestries. And there are such decorative subjects as the Coronation of the Pope and the setting forth of overseas expeditions.

I have reproduced here as our initial illustration that which appears at folio 60 B and shows the Expedition of the French and English to Barbary. Froissart, who was born at Valenciennes in 1337, began in 1372 to write his *Croniques*, which describe events of Western Europe from the year 1326 to 1400. From an historical point of view they are not reliable, yet for all that they do give a picture of his time quite unrivalled for vivid colour and charm; and in exactly the same manner are the illuminations of this manuscript to be regarded. In the accompanying picture we have not the quiet fidelity of van Eyck but an amazing sea spectacle suggestive of regal splendour and prodigal decoration. The fleet of mediæval three-masted ships, crowded with armoured knights, is a conventional impression which will not bear too strict examination for historical accuracy. Clearly the artist was no sailor man, yet this highly-skilled decorator had more than a keen sense of the beautiful. The coloured shields along the top wale of the ships are there not merely because the painter wanted to display coats-of-arms: these *pavesses* were placed along a ship's waist (sometimes even on the forecastle and poop) as survivals of the days when the Vikings used their shields as protection along the bulwarks. Similarly, we know from other sources that the trumpeters at the stern were actually thus placed aboard mediæval ships. Other interesting items are noticeable in such features as the fighting top, with its helmeted

Neantmoins les trois chevaliers
 & sune nommee se tindrent sur
 leur place les trente jours toute
 accomplie et outire puis sen retour-
 nerent tout par loisir chascun en
 son lieu. Quant ilz furent venue

a parre qui leur furent bonne chie-
 re ce fut bien un son air moult
 vaillamment se estoient portees et
 triumpement avoient garde hon-
 neur du royaume de France come
 bien y parut au retour. *III*



FRENCH AND ENGLISH EXPEDITION TO BARBARY.
 From Harleian MS. 4379. By permission of the British Museum.

man ready to hurl darts to the enemy's decks. The sea itself is unmistakably conventional, and the Mediterranean galley even, with its eight oars aside, is quite out of accord with true seafaring. But, for the reasons already given, this unseamanlike picture is a joy to behold.

Less pleasing is the miniature at folio 104 B of this same book of *Croniques*. Here the subject is the "Raising of the Siege of the Strong Town of Africa." The artist essays to give us the true historical idea, but he is too ill-informed of nautical matters and too keen on presenting the general environment to bother much about right proportion. Thus, whilst we see the strong city in the background and the tents of the besieging army still standing, there come before us in the foreground over a wooden gangway the armoured knights to board a square-rigged ship which is related to truth only in regard to general and not detailed conception. Ridiculously small, it still has its bugler at the stern blowing his trumpet. But the sea is painted blue, and there is some quite sincere feeling for distance.

Of the few great mediæval travellers none was more accurate in his narrations than Marco Polo the illustrious Venetian. His influence did not end with his death in 1323, but his adventures in the Far East, his accounts of the geography, peoples, manners, and customs continued to act as an impetus to others. If he did let his imagination sometimes run riot, at least it had the effect of inspiring other generations to use the sea in ships, to exercise an inquiring mind beyond the limitations of the Adriatic and the Mediterranean. Marco Polo, member of the Grand Council of Venice, wonder-man of his age, intrepid, with an imaginative spirit far ahead of the early fourteenth century, was destined to become like the hero of some Greek legend. Thus, even a century after his death, artists were already illustrating his achievements. There is in one of the

manuscripts of the Bodleian (Misc. 264) a miniature thought to have been executed not later than 1410 or 1420, which shows Marco Polo embarking from Venice. Unlike the independent van Eyck, the artist is still hampered by mediæval outlook, yet we can forgive him much. As usual there is no regard for proportion, and the floating swans are about as big as the rowing boat which is to take Polo aboard his ship. The latter is square-rigged, but there is also shown a Mediterranean galley, such as Venice knew so intimately.

This illustration has additional interest because it was the work of an English artist, and we need not wonder that in spite of prevailing geographical ignorance and general horror of the sea, the ship was still at the back of the artistic mind though rarely allowed expression. Just as the larger part of a church was designated architecturally the nave from its supposed resemblance to a ship, so the nautical symbolism was carried into daily spiritual life. The mediæval mentality was constrained to consider "mortal man living in the world as well compared with a ship on the sea or on a dangerous river," so unstable was the world with its tempests and treacheries. There was emphatically no such attitude in those days such as we understand now by the two words "pleasure cruising." But, in the absence of personal marine experience, there were for the artist such opportunities as occasionally offered in illustrating the works of writers.

The French translations of Boccaccio enabled the miniaturists to have just such chances. There is in the Vienna National Library a French translation of his *Teseide*, wherein we see a representation of carracks with landscape of a castle-crowned city set on a hill. There is vitality in this illustration, it is full of informing minutiae, it has originality, yet lacking it is in proportion. We see real ships with a character of their own, but shall we say that these ships were not copied from the work of such a rare ship draughtsman as

the Master W♠, who was flourishing in the Low Countries about the year 1470? No one has given us more intricate knowledge of the fifteenth-century carrack's rigging, and there is much probability in the suggestion that this engraver of Gothic architecture copied his Flemish carrack from some model hanging in a local church. On the other hand, it is possible that later miniaturists, at a loss for some reliable drawing of a ship, copied from this fifteenth-century French illustration of an Italian book. For, apart from Peter Brueghel the Elder, whose period may be reckoned as approximately 1528 to 1569, there were so few other painters whose nautical knowledge as expressed in art was worthy of reliance. Thus it is that a new and more modernized type of vessel is handed down: the lazy or incapable painter prefers to employ without inquiry a stereotyped design that will fulfil all requirement. There is, for example, in an illuminated manuscript at the Landesbibliothek, Karlsruhe, a drawing concerning a voyage *en route* for the Holy Sepulchre. The ship is not quite accurate, but it bears strong similarity to that work of the Master W♠ just mentioned. It is, however, conceivable that this Karlsruhe draughtsman might have done his work from the same church ship model direct. In the Landesbibliothek at Wolffenbüttel is another French manuscript (numbered 1572), of Boccaccio, dated 1409. Here we see the ship with squaresail and lateen mizzen. The proportions are still ignored, hulls are crammed full of people, the sea is ruffled only conventionally; yet it is a definite attempt at sea painting with a suggestion of landscape in the background.

If we reckon the Renaissance period as being covered by the dates 1396 to 1527, we shall find that the awakened interest in classical subjects had its effect on miniaturists no less than on other painters. Such subjects as the Trojan War, but with mediæval ships, or some other oft-told story which necessitated the introduction

of marine details, all helped to prevent the ordinary beholder from forgetting sailors and seafaring. As an instance we might refer to Egerton MS. 1065 in the British Museum, which was written on vellum at the close of the fifteenth century and is of folio size. This volume contains *Les Commentaires de César*, being a French translation by an anonymous author. At the head of each book is a large miniature, but two examples are the only ones that need concern us in our present study.

That miniature which is at folio 116 is unusually beautiful with its blue, red, and green colouring. In the foreground is a blue river with a squaresail-rigged vessel. This and the ship's boat are both alongside a quay, on to which gives the gate of the city. To the right is another single-masted vessel riding at anchor. As an attempt to create a sea-piece this is quite charming, the landscape is convincing, there is character both in the ships and the people. So also in the miniature at folio 146 we have another delightful group of people with spritsail craft floating on a light blue river. There is no denying the feeling for distance and architecture, and one knows instinctively that this comparatively modern setting of classical history was taken from positive environment where the artist was familiar with every feature of the landscape.

Finally, we may call attention to another of the British Museum possessions. This is Harleian MS. 4425, and consists of a most beautiful copy of the *Romant de la Rose*. Finely written on vellum, full of the most elaborate illuminations, this fifteenth-century volume consists of 183 leaves, numbered throughout by the original scribe. This well-known French poetico-satirical allegory of the thirteenth century for three hundred years coloured all literature. I have here reproduced therefrom a sea picture showing Jason in quest of the Golden Fleece. The ship herself is conventional with her dark-brown hull, the rigging has only partial relation to truth,



Lalo qui premiere la passa
 Quant les nauires comissa
 Pour la toison d'or a se querre

JASON IN QUEST OF THE GOLDEN FLEECE.
 From Harleian MS. 4425. By permission of the British Museum.

and the mottled blue sea is done in a mere obedience to traditional manner. The reflections of the hulls both of ship and boat are, however, real touches, sincere as well as original; and the illustration is not without atmosphere. The hooded, almost monastic-like dress of the sailors is also worthy of note. There is at the Hague Municipal Museum a picture copied by Cornelis Elandts in 1664 from another painting which formerly used to hang in a Scheveningen church. The original was found to be in such a bad condition that it could not be restored but had to be copied. The subject refers to the year 1570 and shows among other features a Scheveningen herring-buss (or "haring-buys") rigged with a couple of masts and manned by a crew of three. Two of them have headgear quite similar in shape to those in the Harleian MS., and reminiscent of those familiar "lammy" hooded coats which, during the winters of the Great War, were much worn by officers and men of the Royal Navy.

Such, then, were the attempts made by partially informed artists to depict on vellum miniatures dealing with marine matters. During the fifteenth century this work was considerably practised at Bruges, but it is important to remember that the miniaturist's art was quite independent of the progress in oil-painting. It was more varied because it was basically akin to those days of our modern book-illustration when photographs were less relied upon and artists drew the pictures. The miniaturist had a wide range of subjects, from depicting an actual battle to some wholly fictitious adventure born of a romantic writer's imagination. Thus it was that there was greater freedom for the manuscript painter, and especially was the opportunity afforded of introducing landscape, rivers, cities, hills, and the distant ship-dotted horizon.

We are now in a position to watch the beginnings of sea pictures at the hands of the oil-painters.

CHAPTER III

THE FIFTEENTH-CENTURY PAINTERS

THE relationship between art and the sea is really more intimate than most people appreciate. Not being one of the basic forms of human activity such as tilling the soil, art is dependent on the wealth obtained by others : without such patronage and encouragement it would die, and in lean years it is always the artist who feels the pain which comes with economy. Contrariwise, however, the prosperous seaports acting as the gates of commerce and entrance to wealth always are the natural environment for painters desiring to be commissioned. To these harbours have come the raw products of other countries, hither assemble the powerful merchants with money to spend and pride to be tickled, and from here again set forth the ships with the exports that will be turned into further wealth. Thus, as the shipping industry became of increasing prosperity, so were the artists' opportunities more plentiful.

It is geography which has had on history more influence than has any other force, with the exception of Christianity ; and the trade routes of the world have been most potent factors in moulding states, nations, and prime movements. The greatest ports of the world have become what they are simply because of their geographical convenience in regard to trade. Just as in the south Venice rose to its climax of prosperity because it was the natural eastern gateway to the Orient, until the Cape of Good Hope route was discovered ; so in the north Antwerp possessed a unique

position as the natural port of Central Europe. Its commercial prosperity dates from the eleventh century, and it went on increasing till soon after the mid-sixteenth century it was the largest seaport and the richest city in the whole of northern and north-western Europe. Its carracks were famous in the Mediterranean harbours, it was the money market of European princes, it was situated on a mighty river, and in what was then one of the most densely populated regions of the whole continent. All activity seemed to concentrate here, for at Antwerp there was always a coming and going. Besides the sixteenth-century vessels arriving with Eastern spices and silks, metal work and strange animals (to say nothing of those tall stories which the sailors brought with them), there came the merchants from Germany, the scholars from Italy (with their latest theories and conclusions in regard to art, literature, and life), the soldiers from Spain, the traders from England, or the fishermen from north Holland who completed the interesting cosmopolitan crowd. Essentially it was the place for any ambitious painter to inhabit, and the environment was just that where new ideas and original art movements might be expected to take root.

Especially shall we now see this originality in its treatment of landscape. Hitherto, with the exception of the van Eyck miniature already mentioned, we have noticed that artists regarded scenery not for its own beauty, not for its specially endowed pictorial possibilities, but as incidental to some religious or historical or romantic theme. It is characteristic of the conventional Middle Ages that its greatest artists could have lived so long among the beauties of nature without being sufficiently moved to depict flowers, trees, blossoms, and winding landscape apart from the intrusion of figures. The attitude is intelligible only when we remember that the mediæval world was like a book barely opened,

yet full of the marvellous. Or, to change the simile, the wonders of the earth were hardly known, and therefore a source of terror, as the unseen frequently is.

But with the Renaissance there is an awakening from slumber, a desire to know and find out. With knowledge comes confidence, the forces of nature begin to be tamed, ships are navigated to regions hitherto unseen, storms lose something of their fearfulness, mountains and rivers become subjects for admiration instead of being merely obstacles for militant troops. In the Low Countries this new movement expressed itself rather through art than literature, and by no painters more forcibly than the van Eycks, Memlinc, Lucas van Leyden. In Italy the pioneer of realism was Masaccio, who was born near Florence during the year 1401, and surprised his little world by observing truthfully the shapes of mountains as well as appreciating the values of distance and atmosphere. But Italian artists never became realistic landscapists: their Latin temperament never allowed them to eclipse their love for the ideally beautiful human figure.

Exactly the opposite was the condition which was to become established in northern continental Europe. Stimulated by the development and prosperity of Flanders, the right period had arrived when something new and far-reaching should affect the future of art. Hitherto Flanders had produced nothing for painting except the illuminated manuscripts, some wall-distempers and panels. But about the year 1366 came into the world Hubert van Eyck, followed some twenty years later by his brother Jan. These were to found the great Flemish school of painting, to create for Flanders a renown as high as that of the Italian provinces: even to move the centre of art from the sunny south to a land of cold winds and fogs. Nor was that all. Hubert died in 1426, Jan in 1440, but to these brothers belongs that high distinction of inventing the

art of painting in oils, and of having indirectly inaugurated the study of landscape out of which seascape was eventually to develop as a separate section altogether. When Hubert and Jan painted "The Adoration of the Lamb," that wonderful altar-piece for one of the chapels in Ghent Cathedral, they were creating a picture which is still one of the world's greatest masterpieces. During the European War of 1914—1918 not even all the threats and military tyranny of Germany could persuade this unique possession to come forth from its Belgian hiding-place. The story of how it was kept from the invaders' hands is indeed one of the romances of the war, but does not concern our immediate subject.

That which does matter is this: here we have the first real picture that has a fine landscape as background, so that scenery plays no mean secondary part but is of prime importance. The van Eycks in this painting have gone right away from convention and, as if inspired, have exulted undisguisedly in their employment of nature. The green hills, the Flemish city meant to signify Jerusalem, the domes and towers, the flowering shrubs and plants, the beautiful vista of mountains, the fleecy clouds, all have an attraction quite apart from the grouping of the figures and the profound religious feeling which permeated the whole subject.

But this new attitude towards nature was pushed a stage further when Joachim de Patenier, also a native of the Maas valley, set himself whole-heartedly to paint landscape for its own lovely sake. He died in 1524, but not before he had considerably developed this new appeal to nature. Those who were able to visit the exhibition of Flemish and Belgian Art, held at Burlington House in 1927, will remember two of Patenier's landscapes with craggy rocks and winding river as clearly the work of one who was aiming not at decorative effect but open-air truth. Here St. Jerome was, so to speak, the excuse for the landscape rather than the principal

subject. Similarly, in Patenier's paintings of the "Baptism of Christ," the "Preaching of John," and in others, we are given a background embracing miles of country with rippling water and clustering herbage, a far-away cottage, a modest hamlet, a castle, craggy peak, or gentle hill-slope. To all he gave a romantic attraction which is quite in contrast with the mediæval custom of extolling the human figure. It is true that Patenier's colouring is frequently hard, his fantastic rocks and mountains sometimes grotesque, yet in him we recognize the first painter of independent landscape. We have only to examine his village, his windmills, fields, and hill-sides with their grazing flocks ; we have but to note how he paints a broad river and ferry boats, to understand what nature meant to this artist.

One item alone may be cited to establish the difference between this new movement and the old hard convention. Take the legend of St. Christopher, which was the inspiring subject to so many painters at this time. Most of them had been content to let the water be some lightly ruffled shallow or ditch : a symbolic idea rather than a true fact. But Patenier shows St. Christopher crossing a river which is in torrent. The stream is powerful, angry, swollen and gushing : something real and tangible.

And with this fresh inquiring spirit, this new sincerity, nature's grandeur on land as well as water began to receive that attention which had for so long been denied. From van Eyck downwards through such painters as Roger van der Weyden (1400—1464), Dierick Bouts (1420—1475), Hans Memlinc (about 1430—1494), and others, the homely scenery of sweet undulating country with streams, wooded meadows, watermills, and so on became a powerful influence in the art world. This was further developed when later artists devoted themselves to depicting scenes of town and village life, taverns, cows, carnivals : in fact not sublime conceptions,

allegories, and legends, but that immediate environment in which the painters existed. Therefore, remembering that no part of the Low Countries is far from the sea, it is but logical that we find the ocean-going shipping and fishing boats at long last becoming the main study of certain technicians.

There were cross-currents of influence, and eddies, which certainly modified this development. Firstly, there was that unfortunate period when some Flemish artists were impelled by the foolish desire to follow Italian art ideals. But most of those who went all the way to Italy with the intention of emulating Raphael and Michael Angelo merely wasted their time. National art is closely related to national temperament, and it is essential that the former should be true to its own inherent character. As we look at the great Flemish masters painting identically the same subjects which inspired the illustrious Umbrians or Florentines, we are struck immediately by the difference of approach. In the van Eycks and Memlincs—as the most obvious instances—we see Madonnas and Saints full of all piety and religious feeling. But overshadowing them all is a typical Flemish, rather sad placidity, a somewhat heavy melancholy, and an absence of that delight in living or ecstatic exuberance which cannot be omitted by Italian devotional painters. The influence of race, climate, and country are too deeply rooted to allow of transplanting.

Then to this northern austere character came that sixteenth-century Protestantism which took away from the Netherlands all zeal for painting religious art. It enabled artists to concentrate on scenery, home life, and portraits, but especially on the seafaring off Scheveningen, Amsterdam, and Rotterdam. Nevertheless it intensified the Dutch gloom, and to such an extent that we can hardly escape it. Sometimes it is modified, sometimes exaggerated : but in those pictures of squalls and boisterous seas and sandy

beaches we find the artist overwhelmed with the terrible seriousness of existence and the cruelty of turbulent nature. All joy is suppressed; the sad side of life, with man struggling unsuccessfully against fate, seems to affect even the very colouring. But then, with the rise of Dutch overseas prosperity, the fortunes made by the herring fleets, the building of the majestic Dutch East Indiamen, the fine exploits of noble high-stern capital ships in the Anglo-Dutch wars, the gilt-decorated Dutch yachts and barges, we feel a newly-diverted enthusiasm expressing itself.

Through the fifteenth century, and before the school of marine painting began, pictures religious and otherwise, north European and south, timidly went on including ships, sea, and estuary. Memlinc was no exception, and it is scarcely surprising when we bear in mind that his home was Bruges, which, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, continued as the great market centre of the Hanse towns, the city of merchant princes, the emporium of Venetian traders. It was, however, during Memlinc's lifetime that the sanding up of the seaway at Sluis, the increasing popularity of Antwerp, and certain political factors, caused Bruges to forfeit its commercial supremacy.

In Memlinc's glorious "Christ, the Light of the World," which is in the Munich Gallery, considerable importance is given to landscape, and in the background conventional ships are painted on calm water. But the most famous of all his works is the reliquary of St. Ursula in St. John's Hospital, Bruges. This oblong shrine is adorned with a series of miniatures which tell St. Ursula's legend as it was then known to fifteenth-century people. We see this patron saint of maidens arriving with her pilgrims at Cologne by ship, and stepping on to the quay, the porters busy with the baggage, the crew hauling at the halyards to get the ships under way, and so on. But, notwithstanding the wonderful composition of these

pictures and the individualized characterization of the figures, the ships themselves will not wholly satisfy a mariner's mind. Whilst there is some truth in the delineation of hulls, spars, and sails, there is evidence that Memlinc was not sufficiently eager to investigate deeply into the nautical details and proportions. Still this pupil of Van der Weyden saw life through poetic eyes, and in his youth had worked as a miniaturist, though these St. Ursula panels were completed about October 1489. Other artists employed this same legend and interpreted this early martyr's ships, but only with such restricted marine knowledge as might be possessed.

Midway between the illustrations in illuminated manuscripts and those which were made for the earliest books come the drawings of Maso Finiguerra, who was born in 1426 and died in 1464. He, too, was no seaman, but he was an accurate draughtsman and has left to the world ship drawings which all assist to reconstruct the past. Provided we are not led away into accepting every item as accurate, and recollect that the mediæval artist sought rather to please himself and his patrons than to satisfy future naval archæologists, we shall not be likely to draw erroneous inferences. But there are occasions when an infinite amount of patient trouble has evidently been taken by the artist, and there is no better example than that interesting picture in the National Gallery, London, by Pinturicchio (1454—1513) entitled "Ulysses and Penelope."

The Umbrian artist has, in accordance with mediæval practice, not bothered his head about archæological reconstruction, so both the costumes and the ship of this Homeric subject are of Pinturicchio's own time. It is a fresco transferred to canvas, painted in the Pandolfo Petrucci Palace at Siena, and full of his well-known vivacity. There is something refreshing in this artist's evasion of the conventional, but as an imaginative landscape painter he was

surpassed by none of his contemporaries. Pinturicchio never mastered the use of oils and always painted in tempera, yet he took great pains with his work, was prompt in fulfilling his patrons' commissions, thus giving considerable satisfaction to princes and nobles alike. In the National Gallery picture (No. 911, Room VI) we are less interested in Ulysses' return than in his ship, which is seen through the window; and it needs little enough imagination to guess the pleasure which this would create in the minds of those now awakened to the old classical stories. Certainly considerable care has been expended to express a real fifteenth-century ship with square mainsail, two mizzen masts, rigging, and fighting top. And if Pinturicchio did not paint this part of the picture himself, at least he must have employed some one who understood what a genuine contemporary ocean-going vessel really looked like.

Carpaccio (about 1450—1522), being a Venetian, naturally enough was attracted by the sea. Of his life little is known, but we can think of him as an enthusiast dominated by regard for facts. He is another of those artists who painted a St. Ursula series, and he has left behind more ship pictures than any painter of his time. Accustomed to beholding Venice's men-of-war, with their sails and multiple oars, he has not hesitated to depict for our enjoyment these long-since departed craft. Whilst Italian seapieces of this fifteenth century are not numerous, we are the more grateful for such instances as survive. Mention was made on another page of St. Nicholas of Bari, who from the eleventh century onwards became the patron saint of sailors, in whose honour some three or four hundred churches in our own country are dedicated, especially at certain old ports such as Great Yarmouth. In the Vatican is a painting by Gentile da Fabriano, the first great master of the Umbrian school, who died in 1428. Part of his life was spent in



STORM AT SEA. *Painted by* HERRI
MET DE BLES. (*See page 36*).

Venice, where he executed frescoes in the ducal palace, and it is possible that whilst sojourning among ships and sailors he got the information for this particular picture, which is entitled, "The Miracle of St. Nicholas." Nor is it improbable that it was painted to the order of some rich merchant as a thank-offering for deliverance from destruction.

The subject-matter consists of a two-masted square-stern fifteenth-century ship running before a heavy gale and in great danger. Possibly the storm has burst with unexpected suddenness, for the "bonnet" is still laced along the mainsail's foot : in modern language, the vessel is not reefed. Thus the sail has been rent. Crowded together in the unhappy ship's waist are her passengers, whilst on the poop a monastic prays that St. Nicholas may come to their assistance. Forthwith out of a starry sky the sailors' saint appears, and we are left to infer that thus deliverance was brought about. Now in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, there is a replica or contemporary copy of this Vatican item, and the value to us of such an oil painting consists in the fact that it is not a mere conventional product, but a very vivacious and reasonable portrait of a contemporary craft, full of individuality dramatically expressed.

In Northern Europe Hieronymus Aeken, otherwise known as Jerome Bosch (from his birthplace s'Hertogensbosch), was born during the year 1462 and carried on the van Eyck tradition. This Flemish artist, who painted landscape as he saw it, and introduced scenery of the Low Countries into his devotional subjects, has left us such examples as "St. John at Patmos," wherein for sea we are given a Dutch-like estuary. So also, when he depicted the "Temptation of St. Anthony," he provided a landscape with its river and boats. Aeken died in 1516, his style is ingenious and sometimes grotesque, but it was not without influence on that

other curious painter Peter Brueghel the Elder, whom we shall mention presently. Still another link between art, religion, and the sea is to be found in a fifteenth-century painted panel which is at the Marienkirche, Lübeck. Here is a picture showing one of those valuable Hanseatic trading ships which used to go across the sea with rich cargoes, but necessarily well armed to resist pirates and others. She is a fine four-master belonging to a time when such large vessels were as rare as the *Berengarias*, *Majestics*, and *Leviathans* of to-day. Unhappily she was wrecked in 1489, so a survivor has made by this picture an ex-voto offering, and the artist has, without much regard for composition, shown the distressed stricken ship having for its background the Crucifixion, Our Lady, St. John, and various other ships. The Hanseatic four-master was one of those which carried on the important trade between Lübeck and Bergen.

The influence of wind, wave, and ships on the artistic-minded Catholic Flemings as distinct from the later Protestant Dutch is distinctly intriguing, and I have reproduced here two pictures, which (like all the subsequent examples in this book) have been selected from the Macpherson Collection. The first is by that Flemish painter Hendrik Bles, commonly known as Herri Met de Bles (or "Henry with the forelock"). He was born at Bouvignes about the year 1480, but studied under Joachim Patenier at Antwerp and absorbed a good deal of his style. The latter's somewhat crude landscape with fantastic rocks are still noticeable though more subdued in tone, and the stiff, hard manner of Bles is characteristic of the time. Before living in the Low Countries—and it is said that at one period of his career he settled down at Amsterdam—he spent some time in Italy, where they nicknamed him "Civetta," because he usually signed his work with a painted owl in one of the corners.



ALLEGORICAL SEA PICTURE.
Painted by an unknown Flemish artist.

Bles generally introduced into his landscapes some allegorical or Scriptural subject together with a number of neatly-drawn figures. His pictures are quaint but vigorous, and nowadays much esteemed. From Patenier he derived the consciousness of expanse in scenery and a sense of vastness as distinct from those Flemings who could see no further than the narrow confines of their own Maas country. Like Patenier, too, Bles wished his landscapes to be romantic, his rocks to be precipitous, his skies full of moving clouds. In the National Gallery are two paintings, "Christ on the Cross" and "The Reading Magdalen," which have been ascribed to Bles, though specimens such as the "Beheading of St. John Baptist," the "Birth of our Lord," "St. John Preaching in the Desert," "Mater Dolorosa," "The Flight into Egypt," and other religious subjects are to be found in the galleries of Antwerp, Berlin, Munich, and Vienna.

But, apart from these and his pastoral scenes, we have his effort to interpret a storm at sea according to such knowledge as he had obtained through travel and observation. The picture before us is a quaint mixture of fact and mysticism, yet we have to remember that Bles died not later than the mid-sixteenth century and before a school of marine painters had arisen. Such a picture impresses us as indicating the tremendous endeavours which were necessary before seafaring matters could be transferred to panel or canvas with anything like reasonableness and beauty. It is easy enough to smile at these quaint attempts and half-developed ideas inadequately expressed, but when a state of perfection in art or manufacture has been reached there is little room left for patience with the past: to-day, the first automobile seems as ridiculous as the first locomotive.

Bles here gives us through a mind conscious of nature's force and the Divine control over earthly powers, an allegorical piece

that is more philosophical than beautiful, yet dramatic and realistic. In the gale of wind contemporary ocean ships are trying desperately to get clear of a perilous lee shore, whilst their human enemies in boats and on land await them. It is ugly weather, the sky is black, and there is a general sense of hopelessness for the mariners. But from the top right-hand corner comes a break, and Satan is hurled helpless on to his back; whilst in the top left-hand corner our Lord and the Heavenly Host are revealed by a momentary glimpse. The picture is very dark, though the city on the hill with the warriors rushing down to the beach are more discernible. The actual sea itself is still significantly without character, a mere jumble of massed water, showing that the rhythm and climax of waves have not yet entered into artists' contemplation. They were content merely to regard the ocean as an incomprehensible and merciless monster.

In the next picture we have another allegorical sea subject by an unknown Flemish artist of about the same period, which might well be intended to show the Church as the ship of salvation sailing its course between the dangers of the world as indicated symbolically by the rocks, earthquakes, the threats of carnal man, and the ensnaring beauty of mermaidens. If the artist was no seaman and wrestling with a theme beyond his own powers of expression, there is, however, character in the figures, especially of the vain mermaidens with their mirrors, and the ecclesiastical company aboard the ship. This vessel has just enough verisimilitude to prove that the artist either made sketches from contemporary craft or received some guidance from a mariner. The well-stepped bowsprit, the tops, the main-stay, the sheets have all made an impression on an imagination otherwise unfitted to understand nautical procedure. The blades of the oars, for instance, are purely the result of convention and not observation. But we must take the picture for



FLEMISH RIVER SCENE.
Attributed to JAN BRUEGHEL.

what it actually was : a presentation of an idea rather than a definite narration of seafaring.

But out of this ignorance and chaos was to come informed precision, so that a ship began to look as if she really sailed the seas and men could entrust both their lives and cargoes to her through periods of long voyages. Let us watch how the change in this marine painting took place.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW SCHOOL OF MARINE ARTISTS

THE allegorical picture of a storm at sea, which we have just considered as the work of Bles, is in many respects reminiscent of another storm at sea which was painted by Peter Brueghel the Elder. The latter picture is in the Kunsthistorisches Museum at Vienna, but many readers will doubtless remember its temporary appearance in London when it was shown at Burlington House in the Flemish and Belgian Art Exhibition of 1927. The resemblance between the two paintings is in the treatment of lights and shadows, sea and ships. In both cases we have square-rigged vessels of the first half of the sixteenth century running before the gale. But the similarity of the general darkness, of the heavy squalls, the sharp atmospheric contrasts, and in the crude interpretation of the sea itself is not really surprising when we call to mind that Brueghel spent most of his life in that same Antwerp city.

Few facts are known about Brueghel; even the date of his birth is not quite certain, though it was probably the year 1525, and he may have died in 1569. His apprenticeship was begun under a disciple of Hieronymus Aeken (or Bosch) as already mentioned. Brueghel is one of those interesting personalities who do not easily fit into one particular category, yet we shall not go far wrong if we look upon him as the painter of everyday life who understood the Antwerp sailors, townsmen, and womenfolk, whether dancing, quarrelling, or rioting. He viewed existence with a curious



JONAH AND THE WHALE. *Seventeenth Century shipping in heavy weather, with the whale alongside the vessel in the middle of the picture. Attributed to H. C. VROOM.*

cynical fatalism, and his own personal habits were not strictly regular.

His reaction to marine influence is not confined to this one picture. "The Fall of Icarus," which is in the Brussels Museum and was also among those lent to Burlington House, shows how even at this period artists still loved to link allegory with up-to-date affairs. Brueghel at the left of the picture has painted a farmer ploughing his land, whilst close by is a herd tending his sheep. To the right is an estuary with a fine four-masted ship, such as used to come up the Scheldt to Antwerp from abroad. All these details are so indicated that they have the effect of concentrating our attention. But then, so subdued as almost to be missed, is noticed Icarus making his crash dive into the water.

The insignificance of this startling event is intentional, and characteristic of the painter's cynical outlook. Why bother? Who cares? Does the world worry about the individual? According to Brueghel's philosophy it does not. Therefore the ploughman continues unconcerned at his job, the shepherd thinks only of his flock, the sailors take their ships out to sea, the wind blows, the sun shines—but the catastrophe of Icarus is ignored. The minute accuracy in the drawing of the sailing ship is a joy, and thoroughly in keeping with his extraordinary sense of realism, which is not so obvious in his Vienna storm scene.

Brueghel worked with perfect sincerity, without self-consciousness, and regardless of his public. If he saw an occasion to introduce some marine item into his subjects, he just did so and satisfied himself. Even in his drawing of "The Last Judgment," he does not hesitate to bring in a double-ended boat, and in one of his pictures at Vienna, depicting a dark day of January, he must needs show small craft being sorely tried on an agitated river.

Of his two sons, Peter and Jan, the former was born about

1564 and died at Antwerp in 1637 or 1638. Peter junior also occasionally did marine pictures, as that sea engagement by night which is in the Turin Museum; but he especially loved such subjects as sieges and conflagrations. Jan, the younger brother, however, delighted in the beauty of the seasons, flowers, and landscapes, his period of life being covered by the dates 1568 to 1625. Whilst Peter junior was nicknamed the "Infernal," Jan was given the sobriquet of "Velvet." The charming picture here produced has been attributed to the latter and shows more than a passing sympathy with craft. This example is painted on copper and gives for our enjoyment a quiet peaceful river scene on a Flemish spring day. Fore-and-aft rigged little vessels, such as were used at this time along the Scheldt and Maas, are seen under way as well as alongside the bank. The spritsail is used both with and without a headsail; the lines of the doubled-ended hulls have not been revolutionized even by the traders and yachts which to-day are found on these inland waters anywhere between Antwerp and Amsterdam, as well as across the Zuyder Zee, through Friesland right up to the Ems.

Marten de Vos (1532—1603) was another of those Antwerp artists who could not altogether resist an occasional reference to marine details, but did he not study some time at that other great port Venice? In the Royal Gallery, Berlin, are two instances of how he has been able to make use of some nautical knowledge. In a painting of our Lord at the Sea of Tiberias he has provided a sixteenth-century ship and fishermen hauling in a net of fish: nor can we criticize adversely the attempt to bring home a Galilean incident by presenting just such shipping as his contemporaries would understand. Is there an archæologist to-day who could definitely provide the rig and the lines of Tiberian craft of the first century of the Christian era?



DUTCH WHALE FISHING. *Painted*
by ABRAHAM MATHISSENS.



FORE-AND-AFTERS IN A BREEZE.
Painted by ANDRIES VAN ARTVELT.

There is not. Similarly those sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century artists were rather attracted by the story of Jonah and the Whale as an excuse for displaying their maritime knowledge. This same Marten de Vos did such a picture, though the very big whale, the totally fantastic and incredible ship, and the sea resembling nothing so much as fiery flames, scarcely make for accuracy. These people of the Low Countries revelled in whales, because so much had been told about the sea monsters, and so few landmen or sailors had ever set eyes on them. But the Dutch northern enterprise with regard to the whaling industry was presently to accentuate that eager curiosity. Even Peter Brueghel the Elder in his Vienna painting of a storm at sea does not omit these cetaceans. It was the Jonah story which had inspired him.

The oval-shaped colour reproduction, showing ocean ships caught in heavy weather, marks a distinct advance. Whilst the senior Peter Brueghel was one of the last to be tinged with conventional mediævalism as a marine painter, we now come to the first of the new school which has all but shaken off its shackles of conventionality and very nearly, though not quite, obtained absolute freedom. The subject here shows the Jonah episode treated freshly with the same old boisterous weather, but with genuine ships of the latest date. The sea is still unreal and lacking in sincerity, though there is no defect in atmosphere. The black squall to the right of the picture about to overtry the vessel close-hauled on the starboard tack convinces us, and has obviously been taken from nature direct. The whale's head, which rears itself up alongside the ship in the middle of the picture, and is the cause of dramatic gestures on the part of the crew, is a distinctly more real mammal than earlier artists could portray. But this great ship herself is the chief joy of a noteworthy effort: for the artist knew his job, understood the rigging and handling of vessels, and makes

even the flags to flap loudly in the hard wind. Except in later prints of the seventeenth century it is rare to find this seabird's-eye view of the ship's decks ; and no casual, ill-informed painter would have chosen this angle to confess his ignorance. The seamanlike procedure of running under bonnetless foresail, whilst showing us at the same time a damaged mainsail, is there just because the artist was conveying observed truth. The ship proportions are right, the standing gear is correct, the belly of the canvas is true to life : in short, the painter has (except for the waves) succeeded wholly. For the strictest test is whether we can imagine ourselves aboard the vessel, partaking of the experience suggested : and the answer is that we definitely can.

Who was the painter ? That is not immediately determined. Certainly he was one of the Low Countries artists, and the date was clearly the end of the sixteenth or early in the seventeenth century, as we recognize from the ship herself. This oval, painted on panel, has been attributed to Hendrik Cornelisz Vroom, whilst on the other hand it has been claimed as the work of Adam Willaerts. The former lived from 1566 to 1640, and the latter from 1577 to about 1662 or 1666. Vroom was born at Haarlem, that cradle for artists, ran away from his step-father to Rotterdam, went to sea in a Spanish ship, visited St. Lucar and Seville, came back to Haarlem, went to sea again, got wrecked off Portugal, but reached Lisbon, where he painted a picture of the stormy incident and sold it for a large sum. He was for a second time thus enabled to be back in Haarlem, where he devoted himself to marine painting and became of such eminence that he was commissioned by Lord Howard of Effingham, first Earl of Nottingham and vanquisher of the Armada, to design panels for the tapestries that were to commemorate this campaign. Unfortunately, the London public galleries do not contain even one of this artist's works, though I



GENOESE GALLEY. *Painted*
by GIACOMO DI CASTRO.

have seen two in a private collection as well as in Holland. In particular there is in the latter country a picture showing the arrival back in Dutch waters from the East Indies of three fine ships, with Cornelis Houtman landing in a small boat whilst the crew are busy stowing sail. And it is immediately obvious, in comparing this with the Macpherson painting that there are such strong similarities, in style and treatment that the Jonah example may be by Vroom. In the Rijks Museum, Amsterdam, is an excellent opportunity for studying this marine technician.

Adam Willaerts' range included coast scenes, views of river and canal, fish-markets, the sea, ships, and even processions, usually embellished with groups of small figures. Born in Antwerp, he left there in 1600 and settled at Utrecht, and his pictures are still to be seen in the galleries of Antwerp, Rotterdam, Berlin, Copenhagen, and elsewhere. There is in the Dresden Museum one which shows four big ocean-going vessels, with figures ashore and quite detailed landscape. But whether he was the author of the Macpherson oval is a little doubtful, though on the whole I consider that it is more in the style of Vroom.

We referred just now to the whaling industry. The Dutch were certainly not the first people to hunt these marine mammals, for both the Vikings and the Basque fishermen had done so generations earlier. But by the late sixteenth century there was in the Netherlandish mind such a sea enthusiasm that it manifested itself not merely in the lucrative herring fishery, not merely in East Indian trade, but in a desire to find a new route to China by a North-East Passage. In 1594 the Dutch sent a squadron of four ships under that distinguished Dutch navigator William Barentsz to find such a route. Both this and a second expedition under the same pilotage failed. In 1596 Amsterdam sent a third expedition and Barentsz discovered Spitzbergen, doubled the north-east cape

of Nova Zembla, but one of the two ships became embayed in the drifting ice and had to be abandoned. Barentsz himself died during 1597 in winter quarters, but among other information which arrived home was the unquestioned and invaluable news that these northern regions were plentiful with whales.

The acquisitive seventeenth-century Dutch mind soon reacted, and a most important increase of wealth was thus brought about. Although English, French, and Dutch whaling ships lost little time in penetrating these northern waters for the same purpose, with the inevitable result of jealousies and violent quarrels, and to such a degree that the English whalers somewhat arrogantly claimed to be "lords of the northern seas," yet it was principally due to Dutch enterprise and activity that this occupation was developed along bold lines. Some of the very expressions still in use among the Antarctic steam whaler crews of to-day are of seventeenth-century origin. The word "flensing" is one of them.

Even in those early days the Dutch company would send as many as seven fine ships, but the risks and losses through ice and weather were not light. Having regard to the financial reliance which was now placed on this Arctic adventure, it would have been surprising if some of the backers had not encouraged contemporary artists to commemorate whaling ships and incidents. Whilst quite a lot of whaling prints have still survived (of which the reader may remember instances in my *Whalers and Whaling* history), we confine ourselves at present to the accompanying painting by Abraham Mathissens (otherwise spelt Matthyssens or Mattys), who was another of those Antwerp men whose scope included, though was not confined to, sea subjects. Born in Antwerp during 1581, and dying in 1649, he was thus practising his technique at the very time when the whaling enthusiasm was at its height. The pupil of Tobias Haecht, Mathissens attempted landscapes, historical scenes,



SHIPPING AT ANCHOR. *Painted by*
SIMON DE VLIEGER. (*See page 52*).

devotional pictures, still life, and even portraits. From 1603 till 1619 he lived in Italy, but then came back to Antwerp, where in the cathedral hangs his "Death of the Virgin."

In the spirited "Whale Fishing" Mathissens has left us a record that is of considerable import. One has only to glance back at Bles' ships to note how enormous has been the improvement of marine painting during a hundred years. There is no effort wasted on trying to unite allegory with seafaring, no apology for dragging in the whale by reference to Jonah. Mathissens gives us whaling ships and whales for their own sakes, without any religious pretence or humbug. And the result is full of life. The cetaceans are a little wooden, but that is hardly surprising. Few artists have ever made a success of these creatures, not merely because they are difficult to render attractive, but chiefly for the reason that scarcely any painter has ever seen them close enough. The only satisfactory method is to be present when the whale is hauled ashore dead. But what Mathissens has done is to give us an exact likeness of the vessels with their sails, rigging, anchors, and to show the distinct types of (*a*) a flute-sterned, (*b*) a square-sterned ship. Alongside the former is a dead whale already being flensed, and there is an added touch of realism in the white sea-birds picking up such morsels as they can snatch from the carcase. The three Dutchmen ashore hauling on a harpoon line, and the boat's crew being towed by a whale that has just been harpooned, while a second boat is about to strike, are to be regarded mostly for the purpose of filling in the picture and giving a comprehensive character to the story. Of the six members belonging to the squadron three vessels are still secured by their ice-anchors to the barrier, one is under way, but the other two have been caught and upset. There can be little doubt but that Mathissens was painting a slice of history, and in any case he has left us details that are still

more welcome now that the sailing-ship whalers have recently passed right away.

Almost to the same dates belong Arent Arentzen, who was born at Amsterdam in 1586 but died there before October, 1635, and has left us in his painting life-like details of Dutch sloops and fishermen in thigh-boots hauling in their seine net, and wearing the same kind of caps on their heads that the Zuyder Zee fishermen wear to-day. It is, however, rare to come across works by that other contemporary Andrues van Artvelt (or Eertvelt), who was born at Antwerp in 1590 and died in 1652. This painter specialized in seapieces and delighted in vigorous storm effects. There is in the Belvidere Gallery, Vienna, one of his large pictures, and here I have reproduced another example which is remarkable for its keenness of vision, action, and fidelity. It is characteristic of his composition that he loved so to crowd his ships on to his canvas that collisions could be avoided only with difficulty, and the turbulence of the sea which considerably attracted him is here stressed too. Although Artvelt travelled in Italy and resided for some time at the port of Genoa, the scene which he here offers belongs to the Low Countries.

Of more than ordinary interest is it to have such a "close up" of this fleet under way. They are all fore-and-afters which have been caught in heavy weather in a short, nasty sea. Here again it is the plain sincerity and artistic excellence which make the mid-sixteenth century seem so distant from Artvelt's time, and he has taken the utmost trouble to give every possible feature of these small craft without slurring over one single item. These sprit mainsails, decorated sterns and quarters, leeboards, flags, staysails, and so on are confirmed by the evidence of other marine paintings still hanging on the walls of the Dutch galleries; but Artvelt infuses such a breath of excitement and adds such a human feeling



DUTCH SHIPPING. *Painted by*
AERT VAN ANTUM. (*See page 53.*)

of suspense that we feel ourselves shipmates with the eager alert crews who are handling sheets, sitting up to windward, and keeping the sloops hard going. The vessel at the extreme left hand, with a large flag at her peak, is further intriguing because she can set a square topsail. She is a cutter, and employs the lower yard for the purpose of setting a large squaresail when running before the wind. Such types were used for naval and revenue protection purposes, being able to carry light guns. There is in the Rijks Museum, Amsterdam, a charming little model, fully rigged, which may be compared with this craft.

In the Mauritshuis at the Hague there is a river scene painted on wood by Jan Josephsz van Goyen (1596—1656) a year before his death, which helps to complete such fascinating minutiae that are so dear to any ship-lover. He shows us these sloops with their gay bunting both under way and when brought up, with the sprit's heel-tackle slacked away so as to allow that spar to come forward and the peak thus to be lowered. These may appear fanciful items to emphasize, but they mark the difference between a genuine marine painter and one who merely glosses over technical difficulties.

By contrast with these northerners let us regard the next illustration which is from the painting by Giacomo di Castro. Here is a two-masted Genoese galley of his own period (1597—1687), with its lateen sails, oarsmen, and decorated stern. It moves over a rippled sea ; the setting is typically and conveniently seventeenth century, with its figures and architecture. Di Castro was a native of Sorrento, that summer resort at the south-east corner of the Bay of Naples. He was hardly an inspired artist, he was at one time a pupil of Caracciolo, the Neapolitan painter, but later of Domenichino, to whom Ruskin contemptuously used to refer as a mere "art-weed." But if the Sorrento draughtsman was just one of

those who executed any kind of commission that came along—historical subjects for wealthy patrons, religious pictures for the local churches, a view with shipping if required—he is not to be mentioned in the same category as those conscientious ship artists which Holland was able to produce.

This is not to insist that the southern artists were at all times unable to tackle marine subjects. There is, for example, a painting on wood which was made in the sixteenth century and now owned by the King of Spain, but temporarily lent to the Prado Museum, Madrid, and entitled "Our Lady of the Good Wind." The painter is unknown, and it is a duplicate of one by Alejo Fernandez, but it is of great beauty. About three-quarters of the panel are taken up with the Blessed Virgin's figure whose cloak embraces a score of persons. The lowest quarter, however, indicates some eight vessels of varying sorts and sizes, including one of the great three-masters, a two-master, a galleass, a galley, and even a rowing boat. The persons are not less varied, consisting of merchants, their wives, ship-captains, and the galley oarsmen. Thus this is a pious expression in paint, an act of thanks for having allowed all kinds of people in all kinds of ships to pass over the sea in safety. And this difference in attitude is to be marked. There was never the joyous pride in seafaring, the nautical exuberance, the love of ships for themselves, to be found in the work of Mediterranean artists. Rarely do they paint ships except to express deliverance from maritime peril, whereas one would have expected that the sunshine of the south might have inspired some æsthetic mind to become an Italian van de Velde.

It is, indeed, one of the curious paradoxes in painting that marine work should have reached its height in that Netherlandish region where it is dank and cold for so many months of the year, where there is always a war going on between sea and wall, where



A NAVAL ENGAGEMENT. *The Spanish capital ship is to the left of the picture with a galley in the foreground. Painted by AERT VAN ANTUM.* (See page 53).

the tides are very strong and the sandy shoals treacherously shifting, the landmarks few and the coast inhospitable. True, the whole secret of the contrasted artistic attitude lies in the fact that the Latin races have never taken kindly or permanently to seafaring : even Spain's rise to naval greatness was little more than a brief brilliant flash. But, that notwithstanding, one cannot but marvel how the rough-handed, gross-bodied, jovial Dutchmen, with their narrow Protestantism that was the enemy of art, and their somewhat sluggish imaginations, should have given to the world the greatest number of the noblest sea pictures.

As the seventeenth century went on, as ships and voyages increased, as trade overseas got better and better, so there came the requisite encouragement for artists to perfect their technique. Marine painting was soon to become a whole-time job, necessitating entire concentration instead of being a pot-boiling period till other commissions should come along. The compactness of Holland, the proximity of Amsterdam to Rotterdam, Dordrecht, the Hague, and other centres ; the thorough intersection by rivers and canals everywhere ; the long coastline stretching from the West Scheldt to the Ems ; the hundreds of miles of inland navigation—all these certainly were largely responsible for keeping the Dutch school of sea-painting full of vigorous enthusiasm until the Anglo-Dutch wars broke the national prosperity. The proclamation of Dutch independence had given them a national impetus, yet it was the sight of the Scheveningen herring-busses, the Rotterdam East Indiamen, and the Amsterdam men-of-war which were a perpetual reminder that here were wonderful subjects crying out to be painted. But who was to be the founder of the great marine art school ?

The answer is that it would be more accurate to think of several masters than of one alone. Jan Porcellis, who died in 1632, was the chief of the older generation of sea-painters ; but to the influence

of Simon Jacobsz de Vlieger (1601 to about 1660), and to William van de Velde the elder (1610—1693) must credit be given for having raised the art to a permanent status. It will be convenient to consider the van de Velde in a subsequent chapter, but of de Vlieger it may be said at once that he was the master both of William van de Velde the younger and of Hendrik Jacobsz Dubbels, to be mentioned presently.

Rotterdam, and also Amsterdam, at different times had de Vlieger as a citizen, and in both centres there was plenty of material for him to choose. At other times he was able to run down to the beach at Scheveningen, and the Mauritshuis Collection at the Hague has one of that sandy coast's scenes which de Vlieger painted on oak in 1643. As will be seen from a quite different picture reproduced opposite page 46, his composition is never crowded, his selection is careful, and his execution is remarkably free. In this particular instance of two big ships at anchor, and a local sloop running up with the tide, there is very little wind ; but in treating hard breezes and gales he rivals the grandeur of Ruysdael. There is in this picture an attractive impressionistic softness, yet his colours were very apt to fade, so that they give a cold and murky effect perhaps greater than was originally intended. But that his was a master hand depicting what he perceived through a brilliant imagination cannot be denied. Whether the subject is one of those Amsterdam regattas, which were so popular in his time, calms or storms, or such important occurrences as the arrival of the Prince of Orange at Flushing, this great Dutch exponent is to-day appreciated even more highly than ever.

Much less known is Aert van Antum, of whose life we possess hardly any information. He was a Dutchman who painted his sea subjects from about 1600 to 1640 and was under the influence of H. C. Vroom's work. Van Antum was another of those artists



DUTCH HERRING-BUSS. *Painted by BONAVENTURA PEETERS. (Also attributed to VAN DER MEULEN). (See page 56).*

whom Scheveningen's beach used to attract, and there is in the Municipal Museum at the Hague one of his works which shows the arrival of the first boat returning from the herring fishery. In the Berlin Museum there is by him a seapiece signed "A. A." I have reproduced here two of his paintings, of which the first, containing two three-masted vessels, is hardly anything better than a crude and hurried attempt, not improved by indifferent draughtsmanship. There are, however, features of interest in the reef-points, the beak, and the stowed anchors of the nearer vessel. The sea itself suggests the Vroom already discussed and seen on an earlier page.

But the painting of a sea-fight, which the reader will find printed in colour, deserves careful study. The incident would seem to depict some incident wherein the Dutch and English were in action against the Spanish, and it is possibly intended to have reference to that unfortunate and mismanaged Cadiz expedition of 1625. The elucidation is, however, not without difficulties. On the left is a Spanish capital ship, whilst below is a typical Mediterranean galley, from both of which a hot fire is being poured at another capital ship which returns the fire. But of what nationality is this second big vessel? At the foremast, and also at the main, she flies the St. George's Cross of England, yet right aft at the staff flutters an ensign with the Spanish red and yellow stripes. Has some later artist thought to improve the picture by this alteration? In the centre of the painting we see the topsails and flags of a Dutchman about to be in the *mêlée*.

The impact of the two capital ships causes one of the Spanish sailors of the left-hand ship to fall from the rigging, but the Spanish soldiers aft and in the tops are maintaining a brisk musketry attack. The square stern of this Spanish ship with the figure of a saint, the blue flag flying at the main, the topsails with sheets and pendants, the stowed lateen mizzen, the careful suggestion of the vessel's

architecture, all impress one as the work of a conscientious ship portrait painter. Whilst the Spanish vessel has gone into action having the weather gauge, running under foresail, mainsail, and both topsails, the Englishman is on the starboard tack with everything stowed excepting foresail and maintopsail. The close-fighting method is typical of the time, though one of the lasting lessons subsequently to be learnt from the Anglo-Dutch wars was the value of scientific naval tactics, with ships sailing in line ahead and employing their guns to the best advantage.

There is at Emden a picture which has been lent by the Berlin Gallery and must be compared with this Macpherson painting. The former is almost identical, and the artist is given as Aert Antum : but the German example is oval in shape, yet contains at the foot another and bigger Mediterranean galley below that seen in the Macpherson picture. The flags, however, are the same, even to the St. George's Crosses and the red-yellow striped ensign. It is possible that this artist painted the same subject twice with slight modifications. Two of Aert Antum's pictures are still to be seen at Amsterdam, viz. one representing a naval fight between the Dutch and the Spanish, and another showing the official Government Dutch yacht passing Ysselmonde.

The question of flags is not without difficulty. In the 1625 expedition against Cadiz the fleet was divided into three squadrons, each under three admirals with red, blue, and white flags respectively. The Rear-Admiral's squadron wore white flags, and this expedition was the very first occasion when the fleet was divided into these red, blue, and white squadrons. Now an Admiral at this time was not of the permanent rank which he possesses to-day. Captain John Smith, for example, was made Admiral of New England. The rank afloat was not exclusively naval, but signified *either* the senior officer *or* the senior ship of the fleet or squadron.



GALE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN.
Painted by BONAVENTURA PEETERS.
(See page 57).

The latter might be a number of warships or it might be a purely trading venture of perhaps three merchantmen bound for Russia. The important point is that the rank was temporary, that is to say for a particular undertaking. During the time round about 1634 the Admiral wore his flag in the maintop, the Vice-Admiral had his in the foretop, and the Rear-Admiral in the mizzentop, with the colours of his nation.

But in Aert van Antum's picture this St. George's Cross is seen flying from both foremast and mainmast at least. We cannot see what is flying from the mizzen. It is quite possible that some artist has painted in at a later date the foremast flag, and certainly it has more yellow in it than white. But why the Spanish red and yellow colours at the ensign staff? There are three possibilities. Either this was a squadronal flag, or some artist may have altered it from a Jacobean ensign, or the English ship might have employed Spanish colours with intention to deceive the enemy. This would be not the oldest example of a *ruse de guerre*, for it was employed during the twelfth as well as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Spaniards themselves being especially fond of this deception. The custom was revived during the Great War, when British Q-ships sailed under neutral colours to deceive German submarines; but before the British ship opened fire she always lowered false colours and hoisted the White Ensign.

If some artist altered the originally painted Jacobean ensign, his task would not have been too intricate, for the English ensign at that time consisted of just a series of red-and-white stripes, but with a red cross on white ground in the upper canton next to the staff. Ever since about 1574 the field of the ensign—or "ancient," as the flag was commonly known—had been striped. But the study of old flags is comparatively modern, bristles with difficulties, and is made no easier by the eccentricities of artists.

The next two pictures reproduced are by the Flemish painter Bonaventura Peeters, who was born at Antwerp in 1614, and died at Hoboken in 1652. The first is extraordinarily interesting as it shows in the foreground a fine big Dutch herring-buss lying to her nets, as was customary, with foresail stowed but foremast standing, mainsail stowed and mainmast lowered, but mizzen mast and sail standing so as to keep her head up to wind and nets. Here was a subject which Dutch artists such as J. A. Bellevois (1621—1676) and others were very fond of painting. In the Boijmans Museum, Rotterdam, there is a Bellevois, where we see a couple of these drifters of type and rig similar to this of Peeters. But in the latter's picture the reader will observe the very interesting detail of a gallows aft on which the lowered mainmast is able to rest. The "*buys*," "*busche*," "*buis*," "*buze*," or "*buss*"—different nations spelt the word as they wished—were fine, powerful ships which used to go from Scheveningen to fish right across the North Sea as far as Scotland, and therefore were very strongly built. In some respects they are not unlike those strange Humber "*keels*" which still survive on the Yorkshire river. These buss-ships were square-rigged and usually worked in company with a large fleet of other herringers, of which some were similarly rigged but with two instead of three masts. Abraham Storck, whom we shall mention again presently, has in a painting which hangs in the Hague Mauritshuis, depicted smaller types of these busses both under way and at anchor. Between such square-rigged craft of yesterday and the lug-sail Scotch drifters of to-day there is so close a relationship that one can still trace the genealogy, even if motor engines are at last destroying the final links that connected us with the seventeenth century.

Peeters devoted greater attention to the study of wave effects than we usually find in his contemporaries, his favourite subject



DUTCH SHIPPING. *Painted en grisaille by WILLIAM VAN DE VELDE THE ELDER.* (See page 61).

being a stormy sea with lightning flashing, ships endangered, and some powerfully contrasted lights and shades. In our second picture, which is painted on panel, we have quite a good example, typical too of his love for a brown rocky coast. Whilst his works are very unequal in merit, there is no denying that his interpretation of the short choppy sea, such as is kicked up noisily off a rocky shore, marks here a very distinct improvement on what we have so far observed in others ; and the clogging conventions of the past are rapidly being swept aside now that artists had become more familiar with marine study. Peeters was accustomed to paint views of Flushing, Middleburg, Dordrecht and other well-known scenes of the Dutch waterways, but in our present picture he has selected what is the very opposite of the Low Countries coast. For the fact is that he was no stay-at-home, but made quite a number of sea voyages, and here we have a Mediterranean scene with an onshore gale that has driven a galley on to the rocks and is about to treat two big ships in the same manner. Not without deliberation did these seventeenth-century artists choose to portray their picturesque vessels stern on to the spectator, for at no period of naval architecture were the gilt decoration and the carving so attractive. We have further evidence of his travels by a picture which hangs in the Dresden Gallery, supposed to be a view of Corfu, and signed with the words "fecit in Hoboken, 1652." Between the Macpherson example of Peeters and one by Hendrik Jacobsz Dubbels, which hangs in the Stockholm Gallery (No. 398), there is such a similarity that one can only regret Dubbels' antecedents are not traceable. It is necessary, by the way, not to confuse Bonaventura Peeters with his relative, also a marine painter, who was born in 1648 and died in 1702.

Whilst the picture of herring-busses is here given as the work of Bonaventura Peeters, it is so ascribed with reserve. There is

reason to think that the artist might have been Adam Frans van der Meulen (1632—1694), a Fleming who was born at Brussels. There is a picture of a hunting party by him in the National Gallery, but he was fond also of doing battle-pieces. Invited to the French Court, he was employed on the designs for the Gobelins tapestries, went with Louis XIV on his campaigns and painted his battles. But whoever depicted these herring-busses was certainly either a Fleming or a Dutchman more than familiar with the fishing fleets. And he must have been at work during the mid-seventeenth century.

And now that we have witnessed the last vestige of mediævalism banished for ever from art, and have seen marine painters so occupied that they could afford to separate ships and the sea from mere landscape and genre, let us behold the greatest Dutch masters triumphing over nautical minutiae, taking advantage of those amazing clear atmospheric effects which characterize Holland ; let us note how faithfully these seventeenth-century van de Veldes and others wrestled with the highly technical problem of making those highly complicated men-of-war so real yet so idealized. For we now come to consider the students, and not the caricaturists, of nature ; the men who approached their subject with that awe and humility which the sea demands. And, because of this reverential sincerity of approach by artists, there was to be set going by van de Velde and his son, by Backhuyzen and their successors, such an influence as made it possible for the English nation of seafarers to become also possessed of its own school of sea-painting.



SEAFIGHT. *Attributed to* RENIER NOOMS. (*See page 64*).



SHIPPING AND CRAFT. *Painted by* RENIER NOOMS. (*See page 64*).

CHAPTER V

THE GOLDEN AGE OF SEA-PAINTING

WHILST it is not always possible to trace effects back to their causes, especially in so human a subject as ours, we can none the less perceive those influences which contributed to bring about, in a country so long suppressed, a wonderful and historic new art movement. Reaction is a condition full of exceptional possibilities, whether in the sphere of physical sensitiveness as with new health after sickness, spring after winter, or in freedom after restraint. Within our own time some of the most eccentric outbursts in poetry and painting have been brought about by a sudden loosening of cramped aspirations.

Now in the Netherlands there was a variety of causes which, in a comparatively short time, produced the most brilliant school of sea-painters that the world has ever known. Partly must the reason be found in that terrific patriotic reaction which came as a result of shaking off Spanish rule, and finding the freedom of national expression ; but that is not the entire story. The increase of wealth through overseas enterprise ; the consequent inducement to encourage luxury and ostentation in private and civic life ; the rise to naval supremacy, combined with considerable pride in building magnificent ships both for the East India Company and for war ; the immigration to Holland of those Flemish artists from Antwerp, with their technical excellence and traditional ability to depict elaborate landscape—all these created just those circumstances requisite for the brief but golden age of marine art.

By the close of the seventeenth century Dutch commercial and naval supremacy passed away ; there was little enough encouragement for gifted painters to do their best. To-day, as one sails through the Dutch waterways and looks up at the gabled buildings, the substantial and decorated warehouses on the quays, we know at once that the prosperity of the Netherlands reached its peak before the eighteenth century came in. With economy usurping the position of luxury, with poverty instead of wealth, with a cut-down navy and a mercantile marine now tightly limited, the short-lived sea enthusiasm was gone, and with it vanished the high standard of sea-painting.

It is but just that we should emphasize quite another aspect. Had the Dutch national character sufficient creative and staying power, even assuming the Anglo-Dutch wars might perchance have ended in favour of Holland ? It is a subject that is capable of being argued unfavourably to the Netherlands. Painting, like all the arts, must be an appeal from the emotions to the emotions. Now the Dutch are singularly lacking in emotion, their mentality is essentially domesticated, parochial, perhaps even petty. Whilst Italian art was descended from the grandeur that was Rome in sculpture and mural painting, and concerned itself in decorating large wall spaces, Netherlandish art sprang from miniatures illuminating manuscripts, and thence through the intimate scenes of home or countryside to seapieces and portraits. The endeavour of a man's soul seeking to express by line and colour some sublime religious or philosophic thought does not ordinarily come to these men of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Haarlem, and so on. There is no wrestling with a great idea, but a spontaneous and simple effort to paint immediate surroundings with the undivided sincerity of a childlike nature.

Thus, during this period of the greatest marine painters we find



SEVENTEENTH CENTURY SHIP CAREENED.
Painted by RENIER NOOMS. (See page 64).

a whole-hearted study not of abstract ideas but of waves and weather in relation to ships. Instead of poetic dreamers we have practical realists working in a manner devoid of affectation. For the first time in history the sea as a subject receives concentrated and worthy treatment, the effect of sunlight on green waves is caught accurately, so that unsuspected beauties wrought by vaporous North Sea skies and cloud-shadows become startlingly manifest. It is all just a specialized development of genre painting, but given an independent existence of its own and endowed with exceptional vitality. The call of the deep is now heard by artists, and listened to by landsmen, whereas previously few but merchants and sailors could be fascinated by its appeal.

This artistic independence, then, more or less synchronizes with the attainment of full political independence, but passes to England when Dutch sea-power wanes and English maritime strength rises. If there is one name which sums up this attainment and transition, we find it unquestionably in van de Velde. The perfect sincerity, meticulous Dutch accuracy and freedom from conventionality, are all here concentrated. One glance at the picture facing page 56 by William van de Velde the elder, father of modern sea-painting, makes the argument immediately clear. Born, almost within sound of the North Sea, at Leyden, during the year 1610, he became a sailor in early life, but before he had reached his twenty-first birthday he had already gained a reputation as one who could paint marine subjects in black-and-white in imitation of drawings done with India ink. The present instance well illustrates his brilliant technique *en grisaille*, that is to say, in a grey-black monochrome.

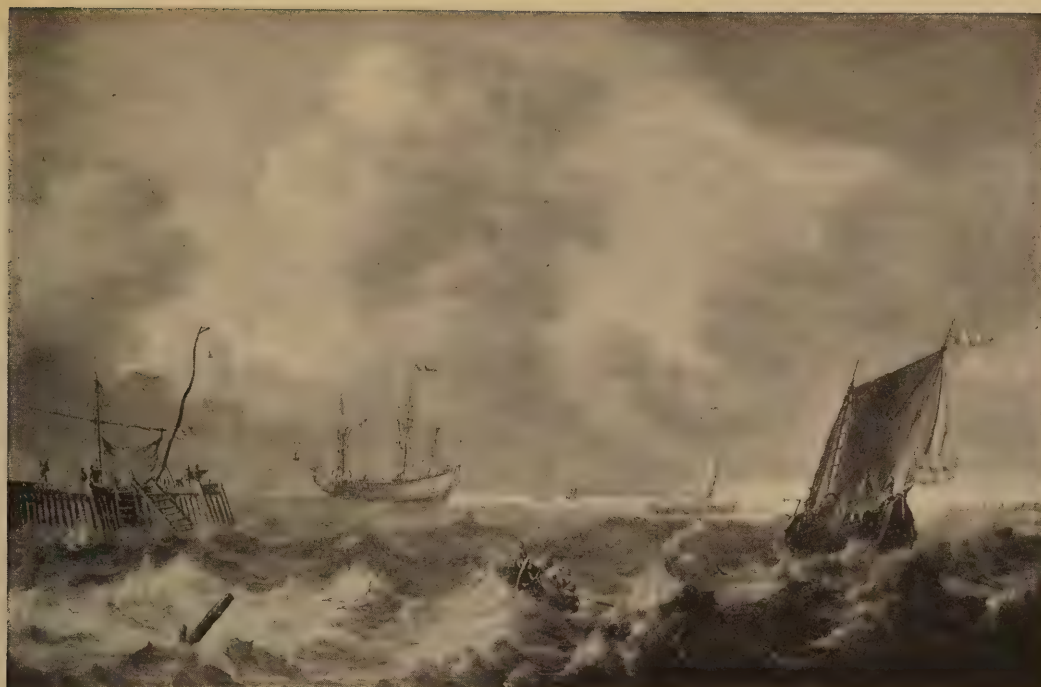
This delicate pen-like work was particularly suitable for expressing those numerous intricacies which compose a sailing ship's character. How otherwise could he have given us such wonderful precision in respect of the parts that make up such a

glorious whole? The figures of the men along the foretopsail yard of the big ship anchored to the left of the picture; the tiers of guns, and sweep of the beak; the tracery of rigging and spars; the perfect characterization in anchored *boier* to the right, and the individualized crowd of spectators on the beach; these have been done with that unrivalled art which conceals art. Undoubtedly this elder van de Velde was lucky to have been born at the right time: when marine prosperity demanded such an understanding exponent.

His talents recommended him to the States of Holland; in 1636 he had come from Leyden to Amsterdam, which was then alive with square-rigged shipping and sloop-rigged fore-and-afters, as we know from contemporary prints. The Anglo-Dutch wars began, van de Velde had a Government yacht placed at his disposal to witness and make sketches of the sea-fights, thus becoming the first war artist to gather first-hand information. But primarily he was a ship-draughtsman rather than a sea-painter. These *en grisaille* pictures done on a flat white ground, resembling large pen-and-ink drawings, are no more lacking in æsthetic charm than is sculpture when compared with a painted picture; for the sailor-artist knew his job and what medium was suited for certain subjects.

It was in 1672 or early in 1673 that Charles II, who knew so much of Dutch life with its art, its East Indiamen, and its yachts, invited van de Velde to England. The Dutchman became the royal painter of sea-fights, eventually received a pension from Charles, and (after the latter's death) from James II. This payment was continued till the artist's death in 1693. He was buried in St. James's, Piccadilly, and on his tombstone was made this inscription:

"Mr. William van de Velde, senior, late painter of sea-fights to their Majesties King Charles II and King James II, died in 1693."



DUTCH SEA-PIECE. *Painted by PIETER VAN DER CROOS. (See page 65).*



THREE-MASTED SHIP IN ITALIAN HARBOUR. *By an unidentified artist. (See page 67).*

Many of the larger sea-fight pieces signed by the father were done from the latter's designs by the son William, whom we shall speak of in his appropriate place. Before leaving his native country the elder William was commissioned by the Dutch East India Company and the Dutch Government to paint all the vessels which left their yards. He was by no means the first or last foreign artist who had to be fetched from the other side of the North Sea. For early seventeenth-century England was without wealth, without colonial expansion, and without painters. Indeed, there had been no Englishman who could depict the triumph over the Spanish Armada. On the Continent, however, engravers and painters of Flanders and Holland were already so skilled that we needed to learn all they could teach us, and even the maps of Drake's West Indian voyage had to be engraved by Jodocus Hondius the Fleming. But so many artists, especially engravers, came over during the seventeenth century from Antwerp, Amsterdam, and other centres that the van de Velde influence was the crowning act of this foreign art tuition. Hitherto there had been neither the occasion nor the money to encourage Englishmen to paint the sea and ships. But the impetus given by Howard's defeat of the Armada, and Drake's great exploits both as a fighter and explorer, created a nautical zest hitherto unprecedented ; so, by the time the Dutch wars were over, and the English mercantile marine (including its fishing fleets) began to prosper, there was enough wealth and enough artistic feeling in the country to carry on the van de Velde tradition by home-bred painters.

The following three pictures are by Renier (or Remigius) Nooms, and he is well entitled to be mentioned next in succession, for he also began life as a sailor, so that his nickname of " Zeeman " still abides to this day. After this period as a mariner he followed the example of van de Velde, and is supposed to have worked for

a time in the latter's studio. His life is covered roughly by the dates 1623—1673, though some authorities give his natal year as 1612. At any rate he was prospering from 1652 onwards, spending also part of his life in Berlin, England, as well as France. We know him also as an etcher of such subjects as the naval fights of 1673, when the English and French fought as allies against the Dutch. He further etched a number of plates dealing with the Dutch herring-fleets, shipping, seaports ; and there was a set of twelve which he drew and etched that were dedicated to Samuel Pepys and were published in 1675 by Arthur Tooker. The glimpse herein given of vessels careened for repairs, ships being built or fitted out, are done by one who had not merely the technique of a true artist but the eye of a genuine sailor.

Of the first painting here given perhaps it were more accurate to say this is " attributed " to Nooms. The subject is one of those sea-fights such as he loved to record, with ships under way and one dismasted vessel already on fire. If this is an early picture, it certainly shows the hand of one who was thoroughly conversant with rigging, and there is no attempt to neglect the correct details of braces or other gear. Even the smoke of battle and sea haze are not allowed to cloud his faithful rendering, where a mere landsman painter would have given just a vague impression.

The reproduction in colour is an undoubted Nooms, and the careened ship which is having her bottom tarred was just such a subject as he often sketched and etched, and saw in the course of his roaming after material. The third picture with its squadron of three-masters is additionally interesting, for it exhibits a bit of fore-and-aft seamanship that has long since passed away and might be eternally forgotten but for Nooms and other artists. To the left of the picture we have a *tjalk* running before the wind towing a boat. Evidently she is just about to enter some haven, or come



SEVENTEENTH CENTURY SHIPPING IN THE SCHELDT. *By an unidentified contemporary painter.* (See page 66).

alongside the big vessel in the centre ; for the *tjalk*, whilst under headsail, has lowered her mainsail by letting the heel of the sprit loose from its snotter so that the peak falls down aft. The sail can thus be taken in. Sometimes, too, when caught in a heavy squall, this was the Dutch method of taking in canvas, whereas the modern Thames barge (descended from the Dutch) would attain the same object by brailing the sail with the sprit still standing. In England there is one of Nooms' sea-pieces at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge. We know little enough of this Amsterdam-bred "zeeman," but in addition to his other travels it is probable that he voyaged as far away as the north coast of Africa, though he was back in Amsterdam by the year 1652 and was so highly regarded that his publisher referred to him as *ille exquisitissimus*.

The item by Pieter van der Croos shows a sea-piece rather than a ship painting. Whilst we have the typical three-masted ship of the period lying out in the tideway, and the little fore-and-aft sloops with sprit and vangs complete, yet here is just such a haven as you might find to-day giving on to the Scheldt with its wooden pier ; but especially reminiscent is that short choppy sea. This marks the stages of advance when we consider how conventionally the manuscript illuminators would have tackled such a subject ; we can almost hear the smack and thud as the little waves hit the bows. Croos has set himself to interpret the Dutch gloomy, windy day, with the low-lying shore, the scudding clouds, the contrasted lights and shades, the sweeping sand-laden tide, and two kinds of sea. There is the true set of waves outside the haven, but a soapy backwash from under the lee of the wooden pier. The deep, steady rhythmic swell of the ocean would have been here quite wrong and untrue to life—though the fifteenth-century artists would not have been able to discriminate. Again, Croos has not been content to hurl at us a few curled stereotyped shavings, but

has taken the trouble to go down to the estuary, discriminate, paint the tossing busy waters just as they looked on a cold, grey day. He was residing in 1647 at the Hague, and in 1651 at Alkmaar, so had not far to go for his information. His style was inspired by Simon de Vlieger, and there is another Croos marine painting to be seen at the Hague Mauritshuis. We know very little else concerning this artist, except that he was a member of the Guild of St. Luke and was probably brother of the painter Anthony Jansz van der Croos, who was born about 1606 and died after 1662.

The coloured reproduction by an unidentified contemporary painter would seem to represent another Scheldt scene, and possibly the entrance to Flushing. The sea is moderately indicated, but it is the three chiefly stressed craft that especially engage our attention as helping us to reconstruct seventeenth-century shipping life. To the left we have what must inevitably have been a portrait of some famous Dutch ocean-goer, with her high stern, stowed t'gallantsails, stowed lateen mizzen, stowed mainsail and spritsails, and running athwart the tide preparatory to anchoring. This was the class of vessel such as the naval architects designed for sailing to the Dutch Indies or fighting in the wars with England. There is much here that would interestingly detain us if we had space to examine the other faithfully detailed features. In the foreground is a "flute"-stern cutter with square topsail, and the artist has been at particular pains to delineate the weather vang of the mainsail's peak. To the right is a Dutch Government yacht close-hauled, with her weather lee-board of course hauled up. Not without reason has the painter shown this craft illumined with the sun, for he wished to light up the gilt and carved stern which was so noticeable a characteristic of these vessels. Except for the fact that Charles II's yacht *Mary* had no sprit to her boomless gaff



NAVAL ACTION OFF SPANISH COAST.
By an unknown painter. (See page 67).



A SEA FIGHT. Painted by P.O.
 VAN SOEST. (See page 67).

mainsail, this craft before us is possessed of great similarity, and the type is often to be seen in the paintings and sketches of the Van de Veldes, Verschuier, and other artists of that age.

Unidentified seventeenth-century artists have provided us with the next two pictures. The first is by either one who left the Low Countries and sojourned in Italy to study southern technique ; or it is by an unknown Italian painter. Only a hundred years previously that background of hills and architecture would have been used as the setting for some religious theme such as the Nativity ; but now the marine artist has used the scenery for the integral purpose of making a two-decker and a two-masted lateener seem to be lying in a real landlocked harbour. We thus have the combined result of Mediterranean and northern influences. In the second picture, done probably by a Dutch or English artist, we have one of those naval actions that were fought by our own ships off the Spanish coast. The English vessel at the extreme left, wearing the St. George's Cross at foremast and main, with the national ensign at the stern, is being raked fore-and-aft in accordance with the best tactics of single-ship warfare. But this painting does not represent the finest seventeenth-century portraiture, nor is the sea anything but the most banal conventionality.

Scarcely superior is the water in the illustration by P. Cornelisz van Soest, the Dutch marine artist who was flourishing at Amsterdam in the middle of this same century, but there is character and there is vivid actuality in the manner of van Soest's telling of a story. Such naval fights as this were his speciality, because war was in the minds of his countrymen, and his patrons demanded this kind of artistic narrative. It is this delicate and minute, rather than bold, treatment that creates a kind of marine Meissonier effect quite different from the broader results which other painters of van Soest's period were attaining.

One sees this immediately on consulting any of Jan van de Capelle's works. He was an imitator, probably also a pupil, of Simon de Vlieger; was a native of Amsterdam, but beyond these bare facts little is known of his antecedents. He was born either in 1624 or following year, and was buried three days before Christmas, 1679. In our own generation Capelle's paintings have become more prized among collectors, but that he was esteemed by his contemporaries is proved by the fact that he was given the freedom of Amsterdam at the time of his marriage in 1653. In the National Gallery, London, are to be noticed some of his coast and river scenes, whilst the Hague Mauritshuis has a winter scene which was once in Sir Joshua Reynolds' collection.

The Macpherson item here reproduced is well representative of his work, and if Capelle soothes rather than arouses our emotions let us not be surprised; for life treated him kindly, and he reflected peaceful calms with craft lying lazily. Here was no case of a poor artist struggling against fate to earn a precarious living, but the prosperous son of a dyer following his father's business as a main occupation, and using the hours of leisure to practise painting. Self-taught, if he was, Capelle was unique of those who imitated Simon de Vlieger, though accurately speaking these Capelle pictures are not sea-pieces at all, but views of inland waterways and estuaries containing local craft such as he saw when he went cruising in his yacht. A friend of Rembrandt, this wealthy industrialist and art collector was in the pleasant position of painting when and exactly how or where he liked. That he possessed also a sympathetic sense of the marine life is obvious from this restful picture of Dutch sloops drying their sails in the windless sunshine.

Time, however, in its accidents and vandalism during the eighteenth century especially, has been a little unkind to Dutch pictures. Their greens originally were the verdure of sunlit sea



SHIPPING IN A CALM. *Painted by*
JAN VAN DE CAPELLE. (*See p. 68*).



SEVENTEENTH CENTURY SHIPS.
By an unknown painter. (See page 69).

or grass, or spring leaves; but owing to some technical lack of knowledge regarding pigments these colours to-day have survived as of brownish-blackish hues than pure emerald. Unhappy varnishing has also assisted in the deterioration by fading. Here is next reproduced a somewhat dark instance of a seventeenth-century picture, but it has suffered further by the wicked hand of a subsequent artist of the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, who thought fit to exhibit his total ignorance of naval archæology by painting in a mizzen sail with gaff and boom to the little three-master which is seen in the foreground at the right-hand corner. No such vessel of the Stuart times ever was thus rigged, but the lateen mizzen (as correctly stowed in the other two ships alongside) was the custom till very late in the eighteenth century; and it is always essential for the art collector to be on his guard against such defects when picking up some dusty "bargain" at a sale or antique dealer's. Otherwise this faded, touched-up picture has the merits of showing a boisterous sea with the gilt, ornate, sterns and quarters which are so characteristic of the period under discussion.

This decoration is seen even more closely in the English yacht with Dutch sloops of the next illustration. The artist cannot be definitely determined, but he has given us a pretty accurate relation of a small man-of-war, for it corresponds closely to an actually existing model made in the seventeenth century now owned by the Earl of Sandwich. Such an armed vessel was a unit of the English Navy, and the jack flying from the staff at the bowsprit-end is noticed not merely in other paintings but in eighteenth-century prints. The naval pennant flying from the masthead of this cutter is also in accordance with contemporary practice.

Resembling the manner of van de Capelle were the sea-pieces by Hendrik Jacobsz Dubbels (1620 or 1621—1676), although he

was one of the first after the success of his pupil Backhuysen to employ the same subjects and manner. Dubbels' style developed more in the tradition of Simon de Vlieger, and the latter has been thought to have been the former's master. Later on Dubbels came under the van de Velde influence, painting in this fashion such subjects as the river scene which is in the Rijks Museum, Amsterdam. Other specimens of Dubbels' art can be studied in the Copenhagen Gallery and the National Gallery, London, but many are in private collections. The Macpherson picture, with its luminous atmospheric effects, its calm water, placid reflections, and small craft, is characteristic of Dubbels' work. His well-known, rather stereotyped, habit of placing light and dark sails in juxtaposition is also here noticeable, though this same artist sometimes chose for his skill both rough seas and shipwrecks along rocky coasts. Our present reproduction, with craft just getting under way, includes a sloop, a three-masted "flute" ship, and another sloop being quanted out of dock into the stream. The sprits, slacked off in the way already described, are cleverly employed by the artist for his own composition.

Jacob Adriaensz Bellevois is a further exponent of the now well established, and definitely settled, mode of Dutch marine painting. Born at Rotterdam in 1621, he lived both there and at that quiet riverside town of Gouda. About the year 1673 he was at Hamburg, but was buried at Rotterdam in 1676. Who taught him we do not know quite certainly, but he was probably a pupil of Simon de Vlieger, that master who was so influential in settling the trend of this sea art. The galleries of Amsterdam, the Hague, and Rotterdam contain his tempests, seas, and ships, including those herring-busses already mentioned. But in the picture before us we have not a mere generic affair: it is a particular occasion.



ENGLISH YACHT AND DUTCH SLOOPS.
Painted by an unidentified artist. (See page 69).



DUTCH CRAFT GETTING UNDER WAY.
Painted by H. J. DUBBELS. (See page 69).

Whilst the Boijmans Museum painting shows us a couple of three-masted herring-busses, broad of beam, stoutly built, and of great power—the one under way with just her large square mainsail set, but the other craft lying head to wind with mizzen only—we have in the Macpherson picture four ocean-going ships of which two are anchored. The third has been careened, which was a necessary operation in the absence of dry-docks. The men are working from just such a raft as is in the foreground of Nooms' "Seventeenth-Century Ship Careened," mentioned on a previous page and reproduced in colour. Her bottom is being cleaned and tarred, her topmasts are not yet set up, and she is having a regular refit. We notice, also, that it is slack water and that the vessels are riding to the wind athwart the harbour.

Coming along under both topsails, foresail, and lateen mizzen is a vessel named *Eendracht*, to which a boatload of people is being rowed off. As in so many of these Dutch pictures, the bowman is shown ready with his boathook. There is some little difficulty in identifying this ship, for there was more than one important Dutch vessel of the same name. There is, however, no question as to her name, for that is clearly painted on her stern; but she is not the biggest type of warship, as she carries only ten lower guns on either side, in addition to a few placed higher. It is possible that she might have been meant for the cruiser *Eendracht*, which carried a total of thirty-two guns, was captured from the Dutch, and became a unit in the English Navy. A second *Eendracht* was that vessel which in 1616 set out from Holland together with another ship named *Horne*, in the hope of finding a new seaway to cheat the Dutch East India Company's monopoly. And it was by discovering a passage south of Tierra del Fuego that they succeeded in their purpose. This, however, was an entirely commercial undertaking.

There was at least a third *Eendracht*, which was a most famous

Dutch man-of-war and mounted seventy-three guns. This was the flagship of Jacob van Wassenaer, Lord of Obdam, who was Commander-in-Chief of all the seven squadrons when war was declared by the Dutch against the English on January 14, 1665. Later in this chapter will be found her portrait by van Mooy, but it may be well at this stage to anticipate by relating her story. Now those were the days of many units, and this Dutch fleet was a vast collection of capital ships, yachts, despatch vessels, fireships and galleots, with a total personnel of more than 21,000. On June 3 was fought the Battle of Lowestoft, and incidentally it may be mentioned that van de Velde was present in one of the yachts and has left us a sketch of the fleet becalmed on the eve of the action, which began at 3.30 a.m. The combat continued until 1 p.m., but in the course of this struggle *Eendracht* tried to board the Duke of York's flagship *Royal Charles*, eighty guns, and this intimate episode for a time remained indecisive whilst each ship fired strenuously at the other. But at the very climax *Eendracht* suddenly blew up, and there are two totally different reasons for this handed down. One version is that the powder-room got on fire through the conflagration which came as a result of some loose cartridges ignited, whilst another theory is that a revengeful negro servant of Obdam set the magazine alight intentionally.

But the disaster was of the first magnitude, there were 409 men aboard and only five of them survived. The loss both of this fine flagship and of Obdam himself created not merely immediate consternation on that day, but a permanent sorrow among the Dutch people at home. Such an important vessel as *Eendracht*, and so proud a national possession, was obviously just a subject such as van Mooy would be glad to paint.

Among Bellevois' contemporaries there was Albert Cuyp (1620—1691) and, as we sail along the tideway past Dordrecht and



THE DUTCH SHIP EENDRACHT.
Painted by J. A. BELLEVOIS. (See page 71).

look back, we can still observe the very scenes which he painted and recognize the very towers. Still Cuyp, son of an artist, and himself founder of the Dordrecht Painters' Guild, was rather an interpreter of sunshine than of the sea. The river Maas with its shipping and craft came conveniently to his mind, for they had been the environment in which he had grown up ; but scenery, skies, and effects of atmosphere on landscape were his main concern. Nor can Jacob van Ruisdael, who was born somewhere between 1625 and 1629 and died at Haarlem in 1682, be passed over, and the reader will find one of this great master's sea-pieces in the London National Gallery ; for it is another of those occasions where Scheveningen's sandy beach summoned an artist out from his Haarlem studio to the sea breezes and open air. Ruisdael was, of course, founder of that great school of landscape painting which included the noble Hobbema. The flat Dutch landscapes, the mountains and waterfalls of other European corners, seascapes with wind-tossed ships—all came within Ruisdael's particular sphere. Nowadays his pictures fetch enormous sums, yet in 1872 the National Gallery sea-piece as one of a pair fetched only £68. When in 1893 it was purchased by the nation, the price obtained was £3,045, and to-day its value has risen considerably higher.

In the Hague Mauritshuis will be found a couple of interesting subjects by Johannes Lingelbach, who, though German by birth, must be reckoned among the Dutch sea-painters. Born at Frankfurt in 1623, he lived chiefly in prosperous Amsterdam, where he was kept busy doing pictures of seaports, battle scenes, and so on. Part of his life was spent both in Paris and Italy, and he made a number of Italian landscapes. Both Hobbema and Ruisdael used to employ him to paint figures into their pictures. In the Maurits-huis collection is a "Seaport in the Levant," painted in 1670, and there is another of his canvases depicting the "Departure of King

Charles II of England from Scheveningen " on June 2, 1660. Lingelbach died at Amsterdam in 1674.

Lieve Verschuier, who was born at Rotterdam in 1630, and is supposed to have been yet another of Simon de Vlieger's pupils, was also one of those Dutch artists who spent some time in Italy studying southern art. The son of a sculptor, he is said by other authorities to have been a pupil of Bellevois. We do, however, know that before 1652 he was living in Amsterdam, that on his return from abroad he painted sea-pieces and fights. In the Rijks Museum, Amsterdam, there are three of his paintings. " Charles II of England entering the Port of Rotterdam " in May 1660, on his arrival from Breda, after having been proclaimed in England as King, is extremely valuable historically. It shows one stage of the royal journey accomplished before covering the brief intervening distance to Scheveningen, where Lingelbach's picture continued the story. Verschuier has given us with a wealth of detail just what we want to know of the Dutch yacht in which Charles reached Rotterdam. There is a full-rigged ship firing a salute, to which the yacht replies from a gun in the bows, and the artist has managed to suggest with the congregation of craft, the splashes of gold, orange, and red, this occasion when courtiers and attendants were enacting an important historical event.

In the same museum is Verschuier's " Punishment of a surgeon for having attempted to poison Admiral van Nes," and there is also a sea-piece. He died at Rotterdam in December 1686. There is about his work a characteristic manner of painting waves, which will be recognized in the accompanying Macpherson picture. Here we have just one of those customary subjects such as his brother practitioners loved to depict. The sandy beach with its dunes, the Dutch fishermen launching over a wooden roller their two-masted square-rigged craft into the North Sea, were there to be



SCHEVENINGEN BEACH, *Painted by*
LIEVE VERSCHUIER. (*See page 74.*)

painted every day. But it is the obvious which is so often thought by contemporaries hardly worthy of notice that it passes into oblivion, just as the once carelessly preserved pictures and models of yesterday's sailing ships are to-day regarded with a longing that will not ensure their return. But in these Verschuier craft we have the direct ancestors of those quaint bluff Scheveningen "pinks" built to stand the bumping of the beach, and thus there exists an important link in the chain of ship evolution.

Certainly such Dutch painters had some consideration for posterity when they made these contributions to the illustration of their history. Ludolf Backhuysen painted "The Arrival of Prince Willem II of Oranjepolder, March 16, 1692," which now hangs in the Hague Mauritshuis, where there is also his welcome picture of the old shipbuilding yard at Amsterdam of the Dutch East India Company. Backhuysen was born in 1631 and died in 1708, and as a marine painter he was ranked second only to the great van de Velde, but the reason is not hard to seek. Firstly, he was a pupil of Hendrik Dubbels, and secondly (like van de Velde), he studied his marine subjects at first hand, sparing himself no trouble or danger. Whilst the van de Velde pictures are noticeably full of calms, Backhuysen's are reflective of the sea's angry, boisterous moods. On more than one occasion did Backhuysen risk his life for the purpose of getting accurate knowledge of rough weather. Born at Emden in 1631, he was not originally intended for an artist, but was at first a book-keeper and then a writing master, his father being town clerk of that city. Ludolf, however, was sent to Amsterdam and became acquainted with a number of painters. It was his fondness for shipping that led him frequently to make sketches of those numerous craft which were such essential features of that busy northern port, and here he obtained lessons from Albert van Everdingen as well.

So excellent were these drawings that they were readily purchased at good prices, and this success encouraged him to do shipping in paintings. He knew his fishermen and they knew him ; for did he not hire them to take him out afloat in the vilest weather ? In the accompanying picture, reproduced in colour, Backhuysen has attempted the favourite beach scene on a squally day with its choppy sea, its fishermen, and local craft. The driving wind and heavy clouds impelled across the sky are well suggested. One feels that this North Sea day is no figment of the artist's imagination, but belongs to a definite date in his life. Even the squall on the horizon has vivid actuality. Backhuysen was not inspired, there is something about him which is heavy and materialistic, hard and austere. We see manifesting itself the mind rather of a routine-ridden pedagogue than of an untrammelled artist. His pictures are somewhat sombre, yet they possess fidelity to their subject. If we do not always appreciate those examples which are still to be seen in the museums of Amsterdam, Paris, Brussels, Berlin, as well as the National Gallery, the Wallace Collection, the Dulwich Gallery, and the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, with the shipping and boats in storms, the views of estuary and river, the embarkations and disembarkations, we must not forget that in his own day this man's work was highly esteemed. The King of Prussia was one of his patrons, Peter the Great used to visit his studio and receive lessons in drawing ; and after van de Velde left Holland for England Backhuysen exercised a very great influence throughout Holland among the younger generation of marine painters. The eighteenth century still continued this high regard, and his etchings were also much valued. Sometimes, also, paintings by such men as Jan Beerstraten (1622—1666) and Johannes Lingelbach were attributed to Backhuysen. In the next picture we perceive an instance of a later and riper Backhuysen. This sea-piece with its fresh breeze



BEACH SCENE. *By* LUDOLF
BACKHUYSEN. (*See page 76*).

and sloppy waves, its Dutch shipping and craft, is a very delightful bit of work. The sturdy ocean-going three-masters and small herring-busses are no stock toys, but real ships. Note, if you please, how amazing is the difference between the painting of this sea and the past insincere conventionalities. Only a Dutchman, or an imitator of his school, could ever have got that foamy, lathery effect and backwash of shallow water coming off the wall to the right. This picture, however, has been attributed to the school of van de Velde.

A Venetian artist would have suggested clear green sea bathed in sunlight, deep and glinting. The joy and beauty of life would be stressed in such a manner that we could not be insensible to the attractiveness. The Dutch painter approached the subject with quite a different attitude, for he wished more often than not to present an incident showing the eternal struggle between the forces of nature against the combined efforts of man and ships. The setting of grey skies, fog, heavy clouds, sand-laden tides, and breaking crests was just part of his every-day environment : it is only because he painted so faithfully what he positively saw that he has been thought sometimes dull. The North Sea, to those who know its treacherous unkindliness, can never be regarded as something romantic, and the Dutch masters knew this well enough. The low-lying coast of Holland, with all its traps for brave ships, could never inspire the delight in living : and these painters knew that too.

Thus, when Gerrit Pompe in the late seventeenth century painted views of the Maas with its yachts and foreign-bound three-masters ; or Abraham Hendricksz van Beijeren (who was born in 1620 and lived all his life in the neighbourhood of the sea) depicted small sloops being bumped about in a confusion of curly waves, with as background a battered wooden pier, a dreary windmill, and mist-shrouded church, they were so to speak tearing pages from

their diaries for their descendants to consider. Pieter Coopse, who was flourishing during the period 1668—1677, one of whose items is here reproduced, was well content to paint his seascapes and sea-fights in the manner that he had learnt from his master, Backhuysen, and with such uninquiring faithfulness to type that the work of pupil has often been taken for that of instructor. Coopse's pictures are well composed, rich in subject value, generally small of size, yet lacking in vigour and that higher distinctive character which lifts a poem, a prose work, or an art work right out of the commonplace. Pieter Coopse's pictures are rare, but the subject which he has chosen of warships bunched together without any tactical sense, of others sinking or seriously damaged, was again the very sort of thing which contemporary buyers enjoyed to own. The sea itself is as bad as in the most conventional of periods, and marks Coopse as one of those people, who were either so lazy or so lacking in perceptive power as not to appreciate the simple fact that salt water expanse is as full of character as the human face.

And, notwithstanding all the praise which quite properly has been lavished on the younger William van de Velde for his marvellous ship portraiture, we cannot be blind to his ineffective and unreal wave effects. When Walpole remarked somewhat grandiloquently that the palm was "not less disputed with Raphael for history than with Vandewelde for sea-pieces," it would have been more accurate to have said "ship-subjects." Nowadays the criticisms of Ruskin are regarded rather as a spent force, yet he was not far wrong when he stated that "the water-painting of all the elder landscape painters, except for a few of the better passages of Claude and Ruysdael, is so execrable." "I can perceive nothing in Vandewelde or Backhuysen of the lowest redeeming merit; no power, no presence of intellect, or evidence of perception of any sort or kind," he went on indignantly concerning the way those



DUTCH SHIPPING IN A FRESH BREEZE. *Attributed to L. BACKUYSEN, but otherwise ascribed as belonging to the School of VAN DE VELDE. A similar picture was sold at the Holford Collection in 1928. (See page 77).*



SEVENTEENTH CENTURY SEAFIGHT. *Painted by PIETER COOPSE. (See page 78).*

artists indicated water ; “ no resemblance, even the feeblest, of anything natural ; no invention, even the most sluggish, of anything agreeable. . . . I know that Turner once liked Vandewelde, and I can trace the evil influence of Vandewelde on most of his early sea-painting, but Turner certainly could not have liked Vandewelde without *some* legitimate cause ” (*Modern Painters*, vol. 1, Pt. II, sect. V). This William van de Velde, who often added “ De Jonge ” to his signature, was the son and pupil of William the Elder previously mentioned. He was baptized at Leyden on December 18, 1633. Three years later the family moved to Amsterdam, where the young William, after having received thorough grounding from his father in the art of drawing ships, was sent to learn painting from Simon de Vlieger, whose other pupils have passed before us already. It was from de Vlieger that the young man copied that mannerism of delicate, silvery-toned, vaporous sea-pieces, an exuberance which lasted as long as his youth. In 1672, or early in 1673, William emigrated with his father from Amsterdam to England, and on March 2, 1674, was appointed Court Painter to Charles II, settling down at Greenwich. Both father and son were granted by the King £100 a year, the former for “ taking and making draughts of sea-fights ” and the latter for “ putting the said draughts into colours,” and this combination of effort created some of the finest sea-pieces which were ever owned by the royal family and nobility of England.

Works by the younger van de Velde are numerous, and to be found in many a private collection. In the London district there are three owned by the Dulwich Gallery, four at Hampton Court, eight at the Wallace Collection, and fourteen at the National Gallery. Except for a short visit to Amsterdam in the year 1686, van de Velde “ de Jonge ” passed the remainder of his life in England and died in 1707. The accompanying picture by him *en grisaille*

is perhaps an extreme instance of his virtues and defects : for it shows him as a veritable master of ship draughtsmanship, yet taking no delight in the sea for its own sake. Whilst these vessels are done with all the detail that we should find in a perfectly rigged model, van de Velde has treated the waves as if they were oak leaves ; and the fact is that he would have omitted the sea altogether if he could. To him it presented no worth-while personality, but was merely a convenient and necessary background. His knowledge of ship anatomy was profound and unequalled, yet his work is not just that literal truth of a naval architect's plans : every vessel which he depicted was a particular individual, with her own distinctiveness.

The picture before us was once in possession of the Pepys family, and the subject indicates Dutch shipping of 1654. The guns and square ports, the rigging and sails, the beautifully decorated sterns, the anchors, flags, and pendants, the very figures themselves (not excluding the usual bowman with his boathook, coming ashore), are all done with such rich delight in the work that it rather shocks us to find the sea treated with a contemptuous dismissal. One can gaze at these ships for hours and still find something to occupy our attention, for the very plank fastenings have with conscientious exactitude been shown also. If we pass to the next picture by him, which belongs to the year 1669 and shows the Dutch fleet under way and at anchor, we still see the ship draughtsman's master hand, though the work appears to have been done more hurriedly. The sea, however, is not water at all, but a half-hearted attempt to combine convention with decorative effect.

Naturally his knowledge and love of ships demanded that he should do historical pictures for his own native country, and we have before us the picture he painted showing the Capture of Nyborg



DUTCH SHIPPING IN 1654. *Painted en grisaille by*
WILLIAM VAN DE VELDE THE YOUNGER.
(See page 80).

in 1659, when Admiral de Ruyter assisted the Danes against the Swedes, Nyborg being that celebrated fortress on the east coast of Fünen Island, and one of the most important towns in Denmark of the Middle Ages. This oblong picture again has a negligible sea, but the aim was to provide incident and not worry about such an element as water, and, like his father, the artist was commissioned to accompany the Dutch fleet so as to produce real battle pictures for those at home to admire. Up till the year 1673, then, we find this younger van de Velde the naval artist and historical painter of the Dutch : but thereafter he viewed events at sea from the English aspect, his official position as painter to the Court dating from 1677.

These three selected examples therefore all belong to the period of his life when he was still living in Holland. The grouping of his ships, the rendering of sky and atmosphere, the rich colours of sunset with banks of cloud, or smoke from a gun, are all part of his technique ; but those pen-and-ink-like pictures (which can scarcely be distinguished from his father's) are the collector's especial joy. This younger van de Velde gave marine painting a dignity and vogue such as it had never experienced in England previously. Here he reigned without a rival, whilst in Holland Backhuysen and pupils continued their own tradition. If we take the period beginning from 1653 (when van de Velde was aged twenty) and ending with 1707 (when he was buried near his father at St. James's, Piccadilly) we cover the highest epoch of Dutch marine painting. He himself had come at the end of a long line which finally combined artistic perfection with thorough ship knowledge—one of the rarest combinations and the reason why there are so few marine painters even to-day. But the time had not yet come when sea-painters, in the literal sense of expressing the character of waves, had yet arrived.

During his long and busy life he was fortunate to have been

surrounded by so much that was asking to be recorded. The keen interest aroused by the Dutch wars ; the great enthusiasm on the part of Charles II for the English Navy, with the consequent founding of Greenwich Royal Observatory and the Nautical Almanack ; this royal master's introduction of yachting into English waters ; and a general quickening of intelligent concern in matters connected with seafaring on the part of those in high places, gave van de Velde his wonderful opportunity. His output was prodigious, and in Smith's *Catalogue Raisonné* no fewer than 329 pictures by him are described, most of them then being in English private collections. But of his drawings the number is vast, and between the years 1778 and 1780 as many as eight thousand were sold at public auction.

By sheer force of ship knowledge, artistic endowment, and numerical output he established an English marine school which during the next few uncritical and decadent generations remained unquestioned : yet he was a rapid worker though, latterly, his own style degenerated into a mannerism which lacked freshness of observation. And this lack of powerful sincerity was no healthy influence for those who were to come after. The most important of his English pupils was Peter Monamy (1670—1749), but Charles Brooking (1723—1759) still further carried on the van de Velde principles.

Inasmuch as the younger van de Velde's style when a youth in like manner bears resemblance to his master de Vlieger, naturally it was to the advantage of dishonest dealers to attribute works by the latter to the former ; yet there is a difference of tone rendering, and types of ships depicted, and there is a more old-fashioned method in de Vlieger's efforts. In the larger pictures of van de Velde, representing actions between the Dutch and English, he often took the trouble to write over the ship its name and



DUTCH FLEET IN 1669. *Painted en grisaille by*
WILLIAM VAN DE VELDE THE YOUNGER.
(See page 80).



CAPTURE OF NYBORG, 1659. *Painted by WILLIAM
VAN DE VELDE THE YOUNGER.* (See page 80.)

commander, whilst beneath the galleot from which he had made his sketches would be found the words "V. Velde's Gallijodt" or "Mijn Gallijodt." Sometimes he would sign his name on a floating piece of board, a flag, a jetty, the stern of a boat; sometimes he would merely put his initials, "W.V.V." or "W. V. Velde, J." or "W. Vand Velde." The Rijks Museum, Amsterdam, has some delightful instances of his merchantmen arrived home in the River Y from the Indies; the Four Days' Battle of June 11—14, 1666; a magnificent yacht lying in a calm at anchor; coast and squall scenes; a three-master caught in a squall and compelled to run before the wind much damaged, with a typical gloomy sky and heavy sea; men-of-war flying the flag of the United Provinces; market boats beating to windward; the Battle of Solebay, June 7, 1672. But his sphere was so wide that sea and river scenes, calm water or rough, historical incidents, vessels saluting with guns, frigates, Indiamen, yachts, coasters, fishing boats, the usual Scheveningen beach, all came within his range.

His brother Adriaen, who was born about the year 1635 and received instruction from William senior, did not follow in the family's marine tradition but preferred landscape and figures. And with exquisite finish it was he who painted those figures which are to be seen in the younger William's "Coast of Scheveningen," now to be admired in the London National Gallery. Whilst no one can thoroughly appreciate van de Velde's ships unless he has enjoyed practical sympathy with sailing craft, the Dutch waterways, the Thames estuary, and the North Sea's fickle moods, every one can be thrilled by this artist's sense of realism, and be thankful that he bequeathed to England an entirely new interest in pictured marine affairs.

More of a local painter was Abraham Storck, about whose life we know little except what we gather from his pictures. He was

born at Amsterdam about 1630 or 1635, and died there after 1704, but probably in 1710. Nor do we know who was his master, though his style is modelled as well it might on Backhuysen. In the London National Gallery there is only one of his works, one in the Wallace Collection, and one in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, though there are half a dozen in the Rijks Museum. In the latter there happens to be a view of an Italian seaport with a busy scene on the wharf and a Dutch squadron entering an Italian port, but otherwise his subjects are usually views on the Maas, a Zuyder Zee roadstead, a sea-fight off Lowestoft, or some active congregation of craft on Amsterdam's River Y, where to-day liners, yachts, ferry-boats, and tugs keep the shallow odorous water regularly churned.

Such a scene is that before us which shows a summer day off that northern city. People are bathing, barges are being rowed across, one yacht is alongside the jetty with the latter's barrelled beacon, others are sailing past handsome three-masters, and the whole picture with its distant towers and spires is gay and gorgeous. Variety of shipping, small craft, boats, and figures all correctly drawn were his special delight. His colouring, so clear and transparent, with pleasing skies and verdant water; and his revelling in the pageantry of vessels gay with flags, or a procession suggestive of picturesque marine strength, all prove his attitude as one who exulted in the lighter side of nautical matters. The galleries of the Hague, Rotterdam, Copenhagen, Brussels, and Dresden all contain some of his work, but particularly delightful is a Macpherson item (reproduced in colour photogravure for the special edition of this book) and entitled a "Review of Dutch Yachts at Amsterdam before Peter the Great, 1697." I have included a characteristic third scene off Amsterdam, once more alive with bathers, groups of figures, a barge, a full-rigged ship, a saluting yacht, and trading



SCENE OFF AMSTERDAM. *Painted*
by ABRAHAM STORCK. (*See page 84*).



SCENE OFF AMSTERDAM. *Painted*
by ABRAHAM STORCK. (*See page 84*).

sloops. These pictures show the Dutch mind striving to get away from national and regional gloom into a merry riot of colour and sunlight, where life is not all violent struggle with waves and tempests. These figures, by the way, are no isolated expression of his ability, for he painted them into the landscapes of Hobbema and Moucheron, though Adriaen van de Velde sometimes helped the latter in this respect. Storck was also an etcher and did a few plates. His work, however, must not be confused with Abraham or Jan Storck, the younger, who was painting marine and landscape subjects during the middle of the eighteenth century.

The London public galleries contain no example by Claes Jansz Rietschoof, who was yet another of Backhuysen's pupils, though there are two of Rietschoof's works in the Rijks Museum, the one representing a few vessels moving over the water in a calm with a yacht moored to the quay ; the other being a storm with sailing craft, and market-produce-laden boats moored by a landing place. He was a further instance of the disciple painting storms and marine pieces so much in the style of his master that the work of the two men is not easy to separate. But seeing that he was born (in 1652) and died (in 1719) at Hoorn, where the same gales, the same short choppy seas, and the same kind of ships were in the neighbourhood available as sketching material, this similarity is not so very surprising. That he attained considerable ability, and was a credit to Backhuysen's teaching, is obvious from the accompanying picture, where he has exactly caught one of those squally Dutch days. That black cloud, which has caused one of the sloops to let go her sprit and run before the wind ; that tall ship with the swan painted on her stern ; and the milky sea against the low-lying shore, are vivid and gripping. It was this kind of occasion in which he specialized and became so eminent.

All that is known of Cornelis Pietersz van Mooy is that he

married in 1656 and died exactly twenty years later. We have before us four extremely interesting ships done by him *en grisaille* after the van de Velde manner, and belonging to the year 1666. The second vessel from the left is Obdam's 73-gun flagship *Eendracht*, and the fourth is the *Zeven Provinciën*, but the other two are unidentified. In comparing van Mooy's depiction of *Eendracht* with that other ship by Bellevois it is interesting to observe that the former is bigger and more heavily armed. The *Zeven Provinciën* was de Ruyter's flagship when, on July 25, 1666, the English fleet attacked the Dutch, who were compelled to retreat and anchor in the Schoonveld, in the very waters that exactly two and a half centuries later were so much traversed by German submarines from Zeebrugge. This *Zeven Provinciën* was just the kind of vessel which deserved to be shown by a first-rate artist that posterity might regard her. Built at Delftshaven in 1665, she carried 80 guns and in that same year de Ruyter first hoisted his flag in her. She fought during the last two Anglo-Dutch wars, and was finally broken up in 1694. She is one of the world-famous ships-of-the-line, and in Dutch history occupies a place analogous to Nelson's *Victory* in English history. Holland is one of the most conservative of countries, and until the recent adoption of the internal combustion motor its smaller craft were but little changed by the hand of time since van Mooy's days. The little fishing boat in the foreground is twin sister to several that I have seen on more than one occasion in that broad estuary Hollands Deep. The little canvas forecastle, into which the crew of two can crouch so as to get out of the wet, is, or was the other day, still the custom.

In that same Delftshaven that gave birth to de Ruyter's famous flagship was born van Salm, who did marine subjects and Dutch views in black-and-white after the manner of pen drawings, though with a skill far inferior to that of van Mooy. As with certain other



A SQUALLY DAY. *Painted by*
C. J. RIETSCHOOF. (*See page 85*).

artists, practically no information has survived, save that A. van Salm was alive in the latter half of the seventeenth century, though one authority makes his period about a century later. It is likely that both a father and son used the same manner, for in the monochrome picture before us the signature is not A. V. Salm but R. V. Salm. If this is the son's work, it is not distinguished and shows the sad decadence into which eighteenth-century Dutch art had fallen : but the fine, big, flute-stern herring-buss hauling her nets at the left of the picture, and the hooker to the right—rigged with jib, foresail, square mainsail, square topsail, but fore-and-aft mizzen, though the last-mentioned sail cannot be discerned—are not without interest. The hooker is just such a vessel as we know was flourishing about the year 1750, and there is an excellent model of exactly this type in the *Nederlandsch Museum Voor Geschiedenis en Kunst* (Rijks Museum), Amsterdam.

Quite delightful is the picture by Jacob de Gruyter, which shows a spritsail sloop crashing her bluff apple bows as she goes close-hauled out to sea. This late seventeenth-century painter knew ships and knew his art : the painting is as full of life as van Salm's is dead and hard. Instantly we recognize that he adopted as his standard the style of van de Capelle, and there is no humbug or endeavour to hide ignorance, but there is some genuine comprehension of water movement. He has left no records of himself, save the bare facts that he was working from about 1663 to 1689, and that he used to paint views of the Maas at Rotterdam with shipping. As a rule one finds that history is silent about a painter when he is not worthy to be commemorated : indifferent art that survives is the most damning of obituary notices, and unfortunately the glory of Dutch art had, with the rarest of exceptions, departed by the early eighteenth century. Gone were those fine fleets which with picturesque dignity expressed sea-power when the tussle with

England was at its crisis ; gone was the wealth essential for the propagation of marine painting, and there was no artistic health left in the country of seafarers.

Adam Silo, who was born at Amsterdam in 1670, is a fair representative of the rather better marine draughtsman, painter, and decorator, who was living during this undistinguished period. Before us we have for contemplation one of those wintry Dutch scenes when the Zuyder Zee was frozen so that the shore people were able to walk out to the imprisoned ships as if they were in the Arctic regions ; and I remember once at Amsterdam having a long yarn with a skipper who was on a particular winter occasion sailing through the Zuyder Zee when the frost beat him, stopped his craft, and he had to walk home. Silo was held in repute, and his drawing of a ship was good. He was a man of parts, for he was skilled in mechanics, and was engaged by Peter the Great to instruct five young Russians in shipbuilding. Some of his marine pictures were painted for the Czar, and he also made a number of etchings showing small craft. Our reproduction well indicates that he had a true appreciation of a vessel's lines. The tubby merchantman, with an exaggerated "tumble-home," and the cruiser alongside are quite worthy effects. It is said of him that he lived to the ripe old age of ninety.

Finally is offered another late Dutch picture with an ice setting. The artist is not identified, but the style is familiar. Here, once again, the Dutch whaling industry has been the inspiration. The treatment of the water deserves no merit, but the whaling ships are quite intriguing. Naval architecture has begun to rid itself of wasteful though resplendent ornamentation, and the sailing ship is settling down into that steady development which will some day make her the ideal production that man's imagination, theoretical knowledge, and practical handiwork can create to overcome wave



EENDRACHT, ZEVEN PROVINCIEN,
AND OTHER SHIPS. *Painted en grisaille by*
C. P. VAN MOOY. (*See page 86.*)



HERRING-BUSS AND SHIPPING. *Painted*
by R. V. SALM *en grisaille.* (*See page 87.*)

and weather. But first must come the rather dreary and un-reasoning eighteenth century, which relied on the past without contributing much to future advance. And if that was the condition of shipbuilding and life generally, it was not less so with regard to marine painting in particular.

CHAPTER VI

THE RISE OF THE ENGLISH SCHOOL

IF we would trace the very beginnings of English painting, we must go back to the days when the walls of Westminster Abbey were rich in colouring ; to the time when glass windows showed a living art ; when the Hour Books and Missals were made beautiful with gold, red, blue, and green. Apart from a lack of appreciation nothing is so bad for art as warfare, and in its train follows poverty which destroys the very environment that the artist must needs enjoy. The Wars of the Roses were disastrous, native talent was maimed at its infancy, and by the time the Middle Ages were ending the English monarch or nobleman who set his mind on having a painting must needs import some artist from the Continent. Thus did Henry VII patronize the Fleming Mabuse (c. 1470—1537), and thus did Henry VIII employ the German Holbein (1497—1543), as Charles I encouraged Rubens and van Dyck, or Charles II established the two van de Veldes.

In the thirteenth century English artists were surpassed by none, thanks largely to the patronage of Henry III, who employed many a painter to decorate his castles and palaces. The French Wars, the Wars of the Roses, the advent of foreign painters could not, however, in their combined effect eradicate a national attitude, and there still existed a small group of English practitioners who were chiefly miniaturists and included such men as Guillim Stretes, Court Painter to Edward VI ; Nicholas Hilliard, employed by both Queen



SLOOP CLOSEHAULED. *Painted*
by JACOB DE GRUYTER. (*See page 87*).



WINTER SCENE. *Painted*
by ADAM SILO. (*See page 88*).

Elizabeth and James I ; John Bettes, his pupil ; Isaac Oliver, pupil of Hilliard ; and William Dobson, who was employed by Charles I.

But Hilliard was influenced by Holbein ; Oliver learnt part of his technique from Frederigo Zuccherò the Venetian, who was working in England about 1574 ; and Dobson was a pupil of van Dyck the Fleming. Even the great Sir Peter Lely was born in Westphalia and studied at Haarlem before he came to England in 1641. Thus it would be untrue to claim that by the time Holland was at its artistic zenith, England was æsthetically healthy and self-supporting. We have already remarked that there was no English artist competent enough to paint pictures in commemoration of the Spanish Armada campaign. Even the earliest dated English engraving is no further back than 1540. But we cannot fail to be thankful that there were enthusiasts of means such as the celebrated connoisseur the Earl of Arundel, at whose initiative van Dyck came over to England, and it was this same peer who did so much to keep Wenceslaus Hollar busy etching plates.

Before the van de Veldes' arrival in England it is difficult to find any pictures of ships painted by English artists, if we except those illuminated manuscripts already mentioned. There is, of course, the well-known roll of Anthony Anthony belonging to 1546, which illustrates with quaint coloured ships the navy of Henry VIII. One half of this roll is in the Pepysian Library of Magdalene College, Cambridge, and the other part is in the British Museum, though the whole at one time belonged to Mr. Pepys. These warship pictures are of considerable archæological interest, but they are scarcely works of high art : rather they show how dead or unawakened was the ability to interpret marine subjects. The sea, not surprisingly, is no more like water than is the pattern of a conventional carpet.

In the celebrated Hampton Court Palace painting which is

supposed to represent "The Embarkation of Henry VIII from Dover in 1520," and has been attributed as the work of Holbein, we certainly get one of the very earliest attempts at showing English ships in a genuine marine setting. The water resembles nothing so much as wool, but the high-charged warships and the buildings do have the appearance of what they pretend to be. Occasionally we come across a rough sketch in a manuscript, such as that which is still preserved in the Public Records Office, and shows an impression sent home by an English spy of a Spanish treasure-frigate about the year 1590. But, otherwise, we have to wait till the Flemish and Dutch engravers came along with their maps and charts which contained some ship or ships sailing along the outlined coast. This subject has been so dealt with in my companion volume on *Old Ship Prints*, that we need not discuss the engravers now. In short, then, we start from the time when the vast and royally fostered influence of those two foreigners the van de Veldes inaugurated for England what was an entirely new development. And this was rendered possible solely because ever since the Elizabethan epoch, which had witnessed the rise of English maritime power, the circumnavigation of the globe, and the descent of Spanish omnipotence, there was a keener zeal for the things of the sea. And those Anglo-Dutch wars, which were so momentous to national existence, gave this zeal a still greater depth. As wars and rumours of wars continued, as France became so dangerous a neighbour, as battle after battle was fought, and merchant ships nosed their way into distant havens but returned with strange tales or wondrous cargoes; finally, as the English whaling and fishery industry experienced its ups and downs, and the East as well as West Indiamen consolidated a highly lucrative overseas trade, the conditions at home were favourable to afford marine painters that support which was requisite for their art.



THE WHALERS. *Painted by an unidentified artist. (See page 88.)*



BATTLE OF MALAGA. *Painted by ISAAC SAILMAKER. (See page 94.)*

When, therefore, we marvel that English marine painting was so late in starting, we must bear in mind the circumstances, and recollect that we had neither the competent artistic technique sufficiently developed, nor the same national seafaring enthusiasm that was burning brightly in the Low Countries at the end of the sixteenth century. It was, however, fortunate that the imported artists who were to teach us, came not from the south but the east. They brought with them not the scarcely credible Italian sunshine and unfamiliar lateen galleys of the Mediterranean, but the same mists and short seas, the moist atmosphere, and three-masted big-bellied ships with which the English mind was already familiar. The Dutch sentiment was so akin to the English, the manner of regarding life was so similar, that the van de Velde found little difficulty in grafting their artistic personality on to our insular character. Unlike the Latins, they aimed not to glorify the human figure, or to express dogma, but to show the beauty of ships.

It was not until the younger van de Velde died that English marine painting had to stand on its own infantile feet and toddle along as feebly as it could ; but already the eighteenth century had arrived. Thus the period under immediate review is extremely short, and the first part consists in following the van de Velde convention till it became outworn and devoid of vitality. For art is most sensitive to its environment, and in a wooden unimaginative age such as the eighteenth century, that was unpossessed of the inquiring spirit, marine painting was cramped and stiff. But so was life ashore, whilst in naval affairs afloat the canker of decadence had begun its deadly work as Benbow found when his captains disobeyed orders, kept out of action, and allowed himself to fight the enemy practically single-handed. Tactics had gone their degenerate way, so that in the words of Admiral Mahan it was now " the epoch of mere seamanship." Rapid promotion to flag rank

was too often due to family and parliamentary influence. Whilst there was inefficiency among the officers there was the worst type of men among the crews, physically and morally, as we well know from Anson's historic voyage round the world. In short, it was a time that was conspicuous for its want of high ideals in conduct as well as in art, though there were certain bright exceptions.

The "Battle of Malaga," fought in August 1704, painted by Isaac Sailmaker, excellently illustrates the prevailing spirit. The battle itself exhibited a want of science and skill on the part of its commander-in-chief, Sir George Rooke: the picture indicates admirably how little was the English painter's skill three years before the younger van de Velde died. Sailmaker, whose surname sufficiently suggests his maritime origin, was born in 1633, so that he must have been an old man (though he lived till eighty-eight) when he did this uninspired group of ships and galleys; and even Admiral Rooke can hardly have felt proud of this pictorial muddle. But Isaac Sailmaker was the first English marine painter to produce in oils his country's naval incidents, and such engravers as Van der Gucht made plates of his pictures. It was Cromwell who had appointed Sailmaker to paint a view of the fleet before Mardyke, and it has for some time been thought that none of Sailmaker's oil paintings still exists, though his engravings are rare and fetch high prices.

There is absolutely none of what Ruskin was pleased to call "the sweeping glory of the sea" in this painting: indeed, what are intended for waves might just as well do for a furrowed field. There is a complete failure, as compared with the best of our modern painters, to perceive the supreme majesty and varied grandeur of the sea itself: but if that age was deficient in imagination, the sense of reverence and awe with which an artist approaches the great forces of nature was absent also. Nowadays a distin-



SEVENTEENTH CENTURY THREE-DECKER.
Painted by ANTONIO VERRIO. (See page 96.)



OFF GREENWICH. *Painted by
 an unidentified artist. (See page 97.)*

guished artist would scarcely have touched his subject unless his seas suggested a wild unconquerable power or a changeable tameness. And it is most significant that our ancestors still could perceive no merit in painting the sea for its own sake as they did trees and open country. For the fact is that something within them prevented their groping sufficiently deep to realize the soul and character of the waves, to separate the motion of an Atlantic swell from the pea-soup choppiness of the Thames estuary. So each artist had his own stock stencil sea, and used it for the Mediterranean or any other water.

Living at this period was Claude Lorraine (1600—1682). Not every one would disagree with Ruskin's statement that "The seas of Claude are the finest pieces of water-painting in ancient art. I do not say that I like them, because they appear to me selections of the particular moment when the sea is most insipid and characterless; but I think that they are exceedingly true to the forms and times selected, or at least that the fine instances of them are so, of which there are exceedingly few." But the "gentle ripples of waveless seas" in Claude's seaports are something quite different from the vigorous crested monsters which would be painted to-day by an artist who has come back from a long voyage. And this point deserves to be stressed, for it is one of the unfortunate faults of these eighteenth-century English marine artists that they painted and studied the sea not afloat but from the shore, whenever they got away from their preconceived conventions.

Somehow it did not seem to be understood that the sea takes on entirely different personalities according to the position from which you regard it. Seen from the beach it is just a series of monotonous breakers bursting. Seen from mid-Channel it is again different as viewed from a Deal galley or a Revenue cutter. Seen from mid-Atlantic the waves are different according to

whether they are considered from the lower deck of a frigate or the mast-head of a three-decker. Every one in these modern days who has tried to photograph a big following sea well knows that the camera never succeeds : it always underrates the waves' height. If an artist travelling to America wants to paint an Atlantic gale, he will not get the most powerful results if he remains on the boat-deck. He must go right down till he is not higher than the sea-level.

The finest results of this eighteenth century, and after, were those when the artist had been a professional sailor ; yet such is the power of travel, and such is the complexity of human nature, that even second-rate men can sometimes do surprisingly pleasing work. In an earlier chapter we referred to Antonio Verrio as receiving the caustic criticism of an uncritical age. We have before us one of his paintings containing a fine three-decker in the central foreground, and a yacht flying her pennant about to pass under the big ship's stern. The sea is not superlatively excellent, but the general effect of the assembled fleet and the drawing of individual ships is much better than what we should have expected. This is Verrio's record, and it shows how an Italian was able to adapt himself to northern seas and vessels : Born near Otranto in 1639, at least he was not a stranger to maritime matters. Then, having made so much progress in his artistic career that he could travel on the money obtained from his work, he went to France and settled at Toulouse, where he painted an altar-piece for the Carmelites. Charles II invited him to England, and Verrio was employed decorating Windsor Castle, where he also painted " Christ healing the sick." Altogether he obtained £7,000 for his Windsor work, became also Master Gardener to the King ; and, on the accession of James II, was again employed there. Verrio was regarded, in fact, as a " safe " artist who could be relied upon to



ENGLISH MAN-OF-WAR SALUTING.
Painted by PETER MONAMY. (*See page 99*).



THE ROYAL GEORGE. *Painted*
by PETER MONAMY. (*See page 99.*)

cover large areas in vast palaces with satisfaction to his royal or noble patrons. Thus he did a considerable amount of work for Chatsworth, painted the Grand Staircase at Hampton Court, received the approval of Queen Anne and (when he retired through failing eyesight) a pension of £200 till he died in 1707. The picture reproduced suggests that his contemporary, Abraham Storck, may have had some influence on his marine painting, especially with regard to colour.

Our next picture is by an unknown artist, or perhaps two different painters, for it is possible that one painted the buildings and another did the shipping. The scene is off Greenwich, and was one that was very popular with picture-makers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At the Restoration of Charles II the old Greenwich Palace was pulled down, and a new building was erected in its place: where modern naval officers go to lectures in classrooms, and Nell Gwynn's life was partly spent. By comparison with W. Anderson's painting (further on in this book) will be noticed some alteration in architecture, though the view has been taken from practically the same part of the opposite shore. Greenwich always suggested to these artists the glamour of royalty and the power of naval ships. To-day it is thought of chiefly as a rather dirty place, awkward to reach, but associated with the Observatory. It is too far up river for men-of-war to pass its doors, except for the smallest craft on the rarest of occasions; and the narrowness of Greenwich Reach is not beloved by pilots or ship captains bound up and down between the port of London and the sea. The unknown artist has shown us here three ships of that period when wreathed portholes and gilded sterns were not yet banished from the Navy. To the right is a man-of-war with pennant and flags, running up doubtless to Deptford on the flood tide. To the extreme left is an armed yacht

anchored, also flying her pennant. In the foreground, stern on, is a small but highly decorated three-master flying her pennants, but also the royal standard at the main. A salute is being fired and the two figures about to go aboard may be royal personages. In such compositions as these the artists had so little regard for truthfulness that they were at no pains to avoid showing ships in dangerous proximity to each other. What the painters aimed at was effect and impressiveness rather than fidelity to fact, and there was no one to question their right. Such considerations as wind, unseen but not less strong tides, handiness of ships, were ignored with a wondrous artistic licence.

Peter Monamy (1670—1749) is the finest instance of the van de Velde tradition being accepted and perpetuated by an uninquiring mind. Pierre Monemie is sometimes the manner in which his names are spelt, for he was a native of Jersey who came from the Channel Islands to England. Born about 1670 of poor parents, he was sent across to London, where he was apprenticed to a house-painter who had his place on London Bridge. But Monamy kept his eyes open and his ambition clear. All around him were ships of many sorts, and these afforded him plenty of subjects. So, having painted them, he used to put the pictures in the window, where the numerous seafarers who crossed the bridge could look and admire. In this way he obtained a reputation as well as success, and some of his works were also engraved. One of Monamy's paintings was exhibited in Vauxhall Gardens, another there seen was in illustration of Gay's lines when "William," on going to sea, had to pay a sorrowful farewell to "Black-Eyed Susan," accompanied by all the sickly sentimentalism of the time. Monamy also did such contemporary naval episodes as Vernon's capture of Porto Bello, and this picture was also seen in Vauxhall Gardens.



THE VENETIAN BUCENTAUR, BUILT
1722-1729, BURNED IN 1798. *Painted by*
MICHELE MARIESCHI. (*See page 100*).

Monamy was highly esteemed in his day, his execution is good, his vessels are drawn with knowledge, his technical ability as an artist was high. His colouring is delightful, and he was a careful painter; yet, for all that, there is sometimes a tameness and lack of vigour, as will be observed from that which is here reproduced in colour. Immediately we recognize the van de Velde-like calm with the sails hanging limp, the pennant straight up and down. With true conventional style the warship is firing a salute, just because the famous Dutch master used to have this in his paintings too. Not much can be said in favour of the cutter at the left of the foreground, and in general this sample shows all Monamy's limitations. The second picture and the third emphasize the want of originality and the prevailing Dutch influence, both in grouping and treatment generally. The water is just a placid flat surface, and what we should expect from a former house-painter who had never experienced the suspense, the terrors, the immensities of deep-sea roving.

But Monamy's aim was to please and mollify, to attract rather than grip. He is conscious, as will be observed, of the well-manned rowing boats ship visiting; he liked to show the quiet dignity of big ships and yachts. He emphasizes their heavy anchors and never escapes the van de Velde smoke of cannon saluting. Sea life with him is not shot and shell, fighting and tussle, but pleasant contemplation all on a summer's day where the advent of gales or heavy seas would be sacrilege. In the South Kensington Museum can be seen another of his calms, and there hangs in that collection one of his pictures of the old East India wharf. But private collections are not wanting in the work of this artist, who lived till the year 1749.

By comparison let us have a look at a Venetian painting of this same period. "It seems exceedingly strange," wrote Ruskin

(*Modern Painters*, Vol. I, Pt. II, Sect. V), "that the great Venetian painters should have left us no instance, as far as I know, of any marine effects carefully studied . . . whatever passages of sea occur in their backgrounds are merely broad extents of blue and green surface, fine in colour, and coming dark usually against the horizon, well enough to be understood as sea (yet even that not always without the help of a ship), but utterly unregarded in all questions of completion and detail. The water even in Titian's landscape is almost always violently, though grandly, conventional, and seldom forms an important feature." Michele Marieschi, who died in 1743, specialized in painting those architectural views which were so popular at that time, and in his picture of the *Bucentaur* he has treated her not so much as a ship but rather as part of the architectural background into which she conveniently fits. Here is a case where the painter could only in the broadest sense be called a marine artist ; but he was born in Venice, he lived a great part though not the whole of his life there (for he spent some years in Germany). But it would have been impossible for a Venetian utterly to ignore craft, and especially difficult to forget the *Bucentaur*, though the still water is so crowded that there is not much sign of it having been "carefully studied" for detail. *Bucentaur* was, of course, the name given to the State galley of Venice, in which the Doges on Ascension Day every year from 1311 till 1789 engaged in the historic ceremony of "marrying" the Adriatic. The custom dated from the naval victory gained on Ascension Day, 1177, by the Doge Sebastiano Liani over the Emperor Frederick Barbaross. The spectacular craft in front of us with its beak (that is reminiscent of her ancestor the classical galley) was built for spectacular display and not for serious navigational use. This particular *Bucentaur* began to be built in 1722 and was not completed till 1729 ; but she was burned by the French in the year 1798. This picture is thus



OFF AMSTERDAM. *Attributed to*
JAN STORCK. (*See page 101*).



DUTCH WHALING SHIPS. *Monochrome*
Painted by J. BOON. (*See page 101*).

of unusual historic interest, for it gives a contemporary portrait of the last of a long line of Venetian vessels.

To what low ebb had Dutch marine art descended by now will be immediately evident from our next picture, showing some of its shipping off Amsterdam. This is probably the work of Jan (or Abraham) Storck the younger, who was flourishing about the year 1742, and is not to be compared with that other Abraham Storck previously mentioned. Only in a quite secondary sense was Jan entitled to be called a painter of ships and the sea. Like the Venetian *Marieschi*, he would as soon have done views of landscape, and the detailed Amsterdam architecture is a proof. The wooden-built ships are made unnecessarily stiff, lacking in animation, as formal as a minuet. There is no ship love, no pride in the most beautiful of man's handiwork: they are just features of the watery foreground. All the glory of those days when Amsterdam was at its zenith, when the Dutch Navy and Marine were so beloved a possession, has gone. The impelling, inspiring enthusiasm have vanished too, and the artists paint not because of some overpowering emotion but as a matter of routine. So also in J. Boon's monochrome of Dutch whaling, whilst it bears examination for interesting minutiae and suggests Arctic activity of harpooning, flensing, and busy boat-work, yet as a work of art it is not first-class. This picture belongs to about 1724, and the artist knew more about whaling than drawing. Of the entertaining items none is more illuminative than the shape and number of the ships' boats. The heavy baulks of timber or catheads with tackle attached, clearly indicated, were for raising the whale carcasses. Perhaps it would be unfair to consider such a picture in the category of strict art, and we should be only too thankful that some one has bequeathed to us a contemporary record however indifferently done. People at home wanted to have some sort of illustration to sate their

curiosity, just as the photographs in the modern newspapers bring to our eyes events from afar. But fortunately the Dutch whalers have been well perpetuated by a number of valuable prints.

In exemplification of a claim that the early marine painters were connected with the sea through their original occupation with the ships may be mentioned the case of Dominique Serres. He was born in 1722 at Auch in Gascony, ran away to sea, and stuck to this as a career until he became master of a trading vessel. When he was thirty there came the great crisis of his life, for his ship and himself were captured and brought to England. He now did as so many sailors have done in the past: he resolved to "let the sea alone" and take to art. It has been well said that men of action are capable of writing better than any ordinary amateur; for their highly developed personalities and considerable experiences give them a technique of their own that is marked by deep sincerity. To some extent this is true of painters who have passed a large part of their lives adventuring or seafaring, though it is a necessary condition that the æsthetic sense be more thoroughly developed. Dominique Serres began to express in paint what he had been accustomed to see afloat, and so thoroughly did he succeed that he soon acquired a high reputation. When the Royal Academy was instituted he was chosen a member, and some years later he was appointed marine painter to George III, becoming also in 1792 Librarian to the Royal Academy, though he died in the year following.

During the first ten years that he exhibited under those auspices he contributed about forty pictures, all representing English naval actions, such as Howe's victory over the French and Spanish fleets off Gibraltar in 1782. We expect to find such a seaman-artist painting ships with a sympathetic understanding, and we shall not be disappointed when we examine the next two reproductions. The first shows "The Siege of Fort Royal, Martinique," in January



THE SIEGE OF FORT ROYAL, MARTINIQUE.
Painted by DOMINIQUE SERRES. (See page 102.)



FITTING OUT AT PORTSMOUTH. Painted
by DOMINIQUE SERRES. (See page 104.)

1759. The period was full of anxiety and full of naval activity : therefore the time was ripe for such a painter as this Serres. National feeling against the French was acute ; the danger of invasion by a powerful force of merchantmen, transports, and ships of war, which during the previous year had been in preparation at Rochefort, was a real threat ; but numerous attacks had been made on the French coast by the English squadrons. At the beginning of 1759 it became known in England that the French harbours were now busy getting ready for invading England on a large scale. As counter measures Pitt sent Hawke to blockade Brest, and Rodney to bombard Havre, which was full of stores, transports, and flat-bottomed boats that were set on fire, and Boscawen was operating off Toulon.

But on the western side of the Atlantic other operations were also taking place. The British force on the Leeward Islands' station, West Indies, was under Commodore John Moore, and troops under Major-General Hopson had been sent out from England in November 1758, so that they might carry on an expedition against some of the French Caribbee islands which were thought to be garrisoned only weakly. In January 1759, Commodore Moore met this troop-convoy at Barbados, which then sailed on the thirteenth in company of the British fleet, consisting of vessels mounting 90, 80, 74, 70, 64, 60, and 50 guns down to bomb-ships of only eight guns. On the afternoon of January 15 the force entered the bay of Fort Royal, Martinique, and took up their positions for bombarding. On the next morning a fort on Negro Point was silenced and occupied. The batteries in the Bay of Cas des Navires were cannonaded, and during the afternoon a landing was first effected, so that by the morning of the seventeenth all the British troops had been got ashore, without opposition. But it was discovered that the French had a superiority of

considerably more than double, so, after some small operations, it was decided to withdraw the English troops and they sailed away to Guadeloupe, where the forts were silenced by the Fleet, vessels in the roadstead captured, and the principal town of Basseterre surrendered. Troops were landed, but it was not till the beginning of May that the last of the French were defeated and the complete conquest of Guadeloupe brought about.

Such an incident as the abortive effort off Fort Royal would naturally interest Serres, and he has given us an idea of British ships delivering their broadsides against the Martinique forts, whilst he has not neglected to exhibit his seamanlike knowledge of a vessel's rigging, as, for example, in that to the extreme right of the picture. Nor does it require much difficulty to realize with what pleasure Serres would wander around Portsmouth making sketches of such ships as had come in for a refit. Our second picture, entitled "Fitting out at Portsmouth," painted in 1770, is particularly charming. There is about Serres' work not overmuch strength, but a Gallic delicacy modified by residence in his adopted country. The composition, the figures, the atmosphere, the boats, the very ships themselves show a refined mind and sincere temperament triumphing over conventional environment.

The picture of the French Revenue Cutter *La Paix*, done in 1777, is, however, not quite worthy. Still it has life and freedom when we compare it with the work of Isaac Sailmaker. There was precious little originality in this late eighteenth century, but again we are not without gratitude that an artist should have taken the trouble to hand down to us one of the characteristic fore-and-afters of his time. The lengthy boom and large mainsail are not exaggerated, for British, Dutch, and French Revenue cutters all carried an enormous spread of canvas to enable them to get anywhere near some of the fast luggers which carried on their lawless work



FRENCH REVENUE CUTTER LA PAIX.
Painted by DOMINIQUE SERRES. (See page 104.)



ARMED LUGGER WILL WATCH.
By an unidentified painter. (See page 105.)

as smugglers and worse. In order to afford continuity, it may be convenient here to include the notorious armed lugger *Will Watch* with her defiant skull-and-cross-bones pirate flag flying at the mizzen. It is a dramatic painting by an unknown artist in a nocturnal setting. One of the naval ships under every cloth of canvas is chasing her, and keeping her on such a bearing that the Government vessel can use her foremost gun. The distant lighthouse on the headland and the partly enshrouded moon intensify the emotion which the picture arouses. Already the lugger's mizzen halyards have been shot away and the sail is coming down with a run. The sea is getting up, the black cloud to windward will presently obliterate the moonlight, and we are left with the feeling of suspense as to whether the lugger will make her escape in the darkness, or lose her mainmast when the next thunder booms out from the pursuer.

Now Dominique Serres had two sons, each of which ended his days in poverty. John Thomas was the elder and was born in the year 1759, dying in 1825. There is no question about his skill ; he was Marine Painter to the King, draughtsman to the Admiralty, and issued a *Liber Nauticus* as a handbook for future marine artists. He thus made a definite contribution towards the progress of the subject whose history we are tracing. Serres, so to speak, consolidated the dual knowledge acquired from his father, and extended it. To the average aspirant in art, the rigs and appearances of ships were an awkward and tantalizing puzzle : but John Thomas Serres made it his job to straighten all this out and set students on the right way. As to his own ability as a painter we can judge for ourselves from the accompanying picture of H.M.S. *Barfleur*, which was a very famous ship of her period. She was Rear-Admiral Sir Samuel Hood's flagship in 1782, carried 98 guns, and played an historic part in the Battle of the Saints on April 12, 1782. It was

to this vessel, indeed, that de Grasse in the *Ville de Paris* struck his colours. The British public would therefore thank Serres for having commemorated this famous man-of-war, and we can read the tactics of that important battle with keener understanding and sharper vision having *Barfleur* clearly before our eyes. The setting, however, which Serres has chosen is in the Mediterranean, and it gives him an opportunity to show his ability to paint in that two-masted Mediterranean type of lateener known as a *tartana*, which is lying at anchor under the cliffs to the left.

Dominique Serres' younger son, Dominic, was a water-colour draughtsman as well as teacher of drawing. But we must pass now to another man who was led to paint ships for the reason that he was brought up in their very company. Whilst the Serres family, in spite of domestic and personal incidents, made the alliance of sea and painting closer and more firmly linked, yet there were men such as Charles Brooking and Nicholas Pocock and Robert Cleveley, whose early environment demanded that their outlook on life should be connected with the sea intimately. Brooking, who was born in 1723, was actually a friend and adviser of the Serres; but what led the former to choose ships and the sea rather than landscape or portraits? For answer we have only to say that he was brought up at Deptford Dockyard, that he earned his living there among people who were talking and thinking in terms of seafaring. There were always plenty of craft going up and down the Thames, but ever since the time of Henry VIII Deptford Dockyard had become increasingly important, and in Brooking's lifetime it was approaching its peak of prosperity.

As a result of all this association acting on an artistic ability he became more than a competent painter of sea-fights, manœuvres, battleships, fore-and-afters. But his life, too, was a tragedy, for he got into the hands of low-class dealers, he developed tuber-



H.M.S. BARFLEUR. *Painted*
by J. T. SERRES. (*See page 106*).

culosis, and died in 1759 at Castle Street, Leicester Square, leaving his family destitute. Of his two sons one became apprenticed to a wig-maker, whilst the other became inmate of a workhouse. Charles Brooking deserved a better fate, for he had in him the making of eminence. His ships are virile and technically accurate ; his water is clear though his waves are not always satisfactory. But he succeeded in giving a conscientious and spirited picture that always helped to establish this growing English Marine School just at the time when good guidance was needed. In the accompanying picture the water is not expressed truthfully because Brooking had evidently not studied it, or taken much interest. What concerned him were the ships, and these he has done with meticulous care. The scene is possibly near the North Foreland, on a day when the sun shines and the fleecy clouds drift over the Thames estuary. There is a delicacy in his big ships, but the drawing of the cutter in the foreground is such as could be done only by a man who understood and loved craft for themselves.

These glimpses of eighteenth-century cutters are all too few, and we are more than pleased when we come across them. The next picture cannot be definitely assigned, though it has been attributed to F. Swaine. But the subject is the "Arrival of the Packet at Dover" in 1770. Nowadays, when travelling is so safe and rapid ; when turbinéd steamers and aeroplanes enable cross-Channel passengers to time their arrival with assurance, one is apt to forget that all these changes have come with amazingly rapid succession. In the days of our great-grandfathers the journey from Dover was not undertaken lightly. Many of us have sailed small craft to and from France, and know that with any breeze against the Dover Straits tides there is soon knocked up a sea that upsets any landsman. But the old, bluff-bowed, heavy-sterned packet cutters were utterly uncomfortable for passengers, with

practically no accommodation ; so no one crossed to France except there was some special reason, or he was out for adventure. In our illustration the artist has made some effort to show the character of the waves between the two old wooden Dover piers. The cutter is in the act of luffing up to lower jib and mainsail before running in under foresail only.

Let us refer now to the Naval Review picture which bears the doubtful signature of this Francis Swaine, who was practising in London from about 1760 to 1782, when he died in Chelsea. This was the time when human nature and art seem to have reached the lowest descent that civilized Europe has ever seen. Liberty in France had become extinct, the life of an individual was reckoned of no value, misgovernment and profligate waste were gradually but surely manufacturing a revolution. But in England the social condition was low also, the criminal laws brutal. There was no other country in the world where so many crimes were punishable with death, for the law recognized 223 capital offences. It was an age that was severe in all but personal application, yet at the back of this austerity was no loftiness of ideal. Gaolers in those days received no salary, but sometimes even paid for the opportunity of extracting fees from prisoners in their cruel power ; and it was not till after 1773 that the first movement for prison reform began to be considered. Not till the end of the eighteenth century did any alteration occur in the national spirit towards the poor, though it was less from any sense of pity than from fear of dangerous possibilities resulting from massed discontent. In the services the same unreasoning brutality existed : naval and military discipline was maintained by the savage use of the lash ; even Lord Palmerston resisted the proposal that punishment of a sailor or soldier should be limited to a hundred lashes. But women and children were still working in coal-pits, and sometimes for sixteen hours a day ; boys



SHIPS AND A CUTTER. *Painted by*
CHARLES BROOKING. (*See page 107*).



ARRIVAL OF THE PACKET AT DOVER,
1770. *Attributed to* F. SWAINE. (*See page 107*).

were sent to crawl up chimneys as sweepers, and were hauled out dead. Seamen coming home from a voyage of several years' duration might be snapped up by the press-gang, and sent afloat for another long commission before even reaching home. There was a coarseness in manners: oaths were the readiest words that came to the lips of an eighteenth-century English gentleman; education was so neglected that, even in the early nineteenth century, of all the people who came to be married, one-third of the men and one-half of the women were unable to sign their names.

Thus amid all this lack of a refined feeling it could not be expected that marine painting could show a universally high level. In this Naval Review, with its formal, silly sea, we have the late eighteenth-century mind of an artist thoroughly expressing its limited capacity. The pomp of power is the sole source of inspiration, the booming of saluting guns and the display of spectacular strength are the manner of executing this. Pocock, as we shall see presently, also let himself go on such a subject. Swaine derived most of his remuneration from dishonest dealers who also got him to copy van de Velde's which were sold as genuine originals. But this was quite in keeping with the late eighteenth-century moral standards. At the best Swaine was an imitator of the Dutch masters rather than an independent creator: but that, too, was characteristic of his age.

The Battle of Quiberon Bay naturally provided both an eager public for any faithful picture, and a suitable theme for an artist who could tackle it. The painter in the present illustration was Richard Paton, who was born in London during 1717. If we ask ourselves why it is that the ships and rigging, the set of the sails, and the movement of the waves have all been so well portrayed, the reply is that Paton was brought up to the sea and lived afloat. His life begins like the first chapter in some old-fashioned story,

for Admiral Knowles found him a poor lad running about London, became interested, and sent him to sea. That was the first step in Paton's career, which subsequently developed as an artist. He painted most of the naval battles belonging to his own time, and many of these pictures were engraved by P. C. Canot, W. Woollett, and J. Fittler. Paton did not die until nine years before the new century came in, but he was one of the few marine painters who were not crushed by the conventionalism of their age.

That the English marine painters should have adopted and adapted the Dutch models was perfectly comprehensible. As there existed no other masters in that category one could have expected little else. What does disappoint is that English sea and ship painters took such a long time to free themselves from foreign influence, and speak their own language in paint. They were such a lengthy period finding their own individuality, so shy of expressing their own conceptions in their own way, that one might ask the question as to whether there ever was an English marine school before Turner. Strictly speaking there was not, so long as our technicians were merely repeating over and over again the traditional Dutch "calms with shipping." When the style and colouring (and the ships themselves) of Monamy were so closely resembling those of the younger van de Velde in his later years, we must think rather of Holland than England. It is only when the reforming nineteenth century's influence began to transform English life, and the long-drawn out naval wars ended, and artists were able to enjoy a freedom based on security, that in the true untrammelled sense there developed an English school of marine painters. But art will not be bound down by hard dates, and there are so many side influences that when least expected some picture will upset all inference.



A NAVAL REVIEW. *Signed by*
FRANCIS SWAINE. (*See page 108*).



BATTLE OF QUIBERON BAY, 1759.
Painted by R. PATON. (*See page 109*).

CHAPTER VII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MARINE PAINTING IN ENGLAND

IT is important to note the influences which were now at work in England to take the place of the dying Dutch tradition. Seascape painting being a special development of landscape work, we turn to consider for a moment that last-mentioned wider movement. Richard Wilson (1713—1782) was one of those rare flames which burned brightly amid so much darkness. He has been accurately described as “one of the really great and original masters of the eighteenth century” for his atmospheric truth as a landscape painter. His only rival was Thomas Gainsborough (1727—1788), who is the true father of modern English painting. Not merely is Gainsborough the first of the impressionists, but the greatest colourist of his contemporary countrymen. Both Wilson and Gainsborough conveyed in their expression dignity and grace; but especially must be stressed their absolute truthfulness and fidelity to nature, for, even if it should take years to spread with any universality, here was the very influence of which marine painters in this country stood most in need. And the irony of it all was that though Gainsborough’s portraits were so eagerly sought after, his landscapes used to remain admired but unsold.

Gainsborough’s quality may be summed up as the perfect unity between emotion and method: his art was the pure reaction to subject. He aimed not to tell a story or put forth an idea; his task was to give outlet to his feelings as suggested by a landscape at sunset, a market cart, rustic children, animals, or whatever

came within his vision. He was the immediate inspirer of Constable, and his influence was handed down to the mid-Victorian landscapists. In curious contrast to this comes that other influence of "Old" Crome. John Crome (1768—1821) in his youth came across a collection of Dutch and Flemish pictures whilst apprenticed to an East Anglian coach and sign painter, and it was these which determined his style as a future landscape painter. Thus there is a curious throw-back from new methods to out-worn standards. But it did not end there, for Crome was no mere copyist. On the contrary, he was so accurate in his detailed observation of scenery, sky, and clouds that he was a powerful force against the bane of convention. Veracity and sincerity were his outstanding characteristics, and it is significant that in spite of the influence which Gainsborough already was exercising on young artists, Crome remained unaffected and founded the famous Norwich School, of which Cotman was a member. Crome admittedly painted his pools and trees and sky in the bygone manner of the Hollanders, yet out of the simplest subjects he extracted the most beautiful poetry by the technique of his draughtsmanship and warm harmonized colouring. There are quite a few of his works on view in the National Gallery, Tate Gallery, and South Kensington; but for our purpose there is no better example than that which is in the famous Iveagh Bequest, and entitled "A Yarmouth Water Frolic." Thirty years ago I remember that the septuagenarian watermen and farm labourers of Norfolk would never use the imported Italian word "regatta," but still spoke of a "water frolic." In this Iveagh painting Crome has given the Norfolk scenery and yachts such a Dutch-like character that we must needs agree with the critics who reckon him on the same level as Ruysdael at his best.

But besides Wilson, Gainsborough, and Crome should be



THE NICHOLAS JANE. *Painted*
by R. HOLMAN. (*See page 117*).



QUEEN CHARLOTTE EAST INDIA-
MAN. *Painted by R. DODD. (See page 117).*

mentioned the influential effects of Turner and Constable. J. M. Turner (1775—1851), who learned to draw ships by frequenting the banks of the Thames below London Bridge, went through the period of seeing with eyes that were not his own: Claude, Poussin, and van de Velde were focussing life for him. This was during the years 1800—1820. Thence until 1835 he worked out his own artistic salvation independently, so that from 1835 till 1842 this consummate master of light and colour was at the height of his full maturity. Again the secret of a great artist here is his patience with nature in order to be able to paint her portrait with truth and character. The stress of wind and rain, sunshine and sea was observed, analysed, comprehended, and then set down with unique sympathetic knowledge.

It is another of those well-timed events that Turner should have come into the world just when it needed one who would wrestle with the problem of how to interpret nature, as Flaubert spent hours and days searching for the *mot juste* to express his thoughts. Finally, Turner's great contribution lay in defying all conventionality, all precedents, in giving to seas and ships (their atmosphere as well) a descriptive commentary and explanation such as no one had ever attempted previously. As already mentioned, it has not been thought requisite to include here any of Turner's pictures, for the London Galleries are richly endowed with his works, and the reader is familiar with the oft-time reproduced masterpieces of his marine examples. But Turner's relation to the development of marine art is that of a bombshell or an earthquake, rather than a kindly persuasion. His interest in the sea was rivalled only by his vast knowledge of ships: thus at last the twofold technique is not separated but unified in one great exponent. What the country village was to Gainsborough, the Thames was to Turner. Instead of trees there were masts; instead of placid pools

there was the busy Pool of London with its vessels and craft. Wapping and Greenwich, ship-visiting, trips aboard with watermen, long yarns with sailors, rambles round Deptford, always with eyes and ears open, were the conditions under which Turner's maritime affection as a boy became enthused.

But because he was so individual in his method of analysing and then interpreting sea subjects, Turner has had imitators yet without disciples. There was too much in him, and it was too deeply established, to allow being copied. Only superficialities and not the essence could be grasped by those who came after, so he founded no school but made marine painters gasp with surprise at what he got out of mere water, wind, and wooden ships. At one time, when he was influenced by the Dutch painters, he thought more of the short, shallow seas of coast and estuary than of deep water ; yet he was able in this very sphere to surpass the Dutch masters at their own art. And Ruskin believed that Turner's noblest sea was that of a picture painted in 1840, showing a sunset on the Atlantic after a long gale. " I believe," wrote the author of *Modern Painters* (Vol. I, Pt. II), " if I were reduced to rest Turner's immortality upon any single work, I should choose this. Its daring conception, ideal in the highest sense of the word, is based on the purest truth, and wrought out with the concentrated knowledge of a life ; its colour is absolutely perfect, not one false or morbid hue in any part or line, and so modulated that every square inch of canvas is a perfect composition ; its drawing as accurate as fearless ; the ship buoyant, bending and full of motion ; its tones as true as they are wonderful ; and the whole picture dedicated to the most sublime of subjects and impressions (completing thus the perfect system of all truth, which we have shown to be formed by Turner's works)—the power, majesty, and deathfulness of the open, deep, illimitable sea."



POOL OF LONDON. *Painted*
by R. DODD. (*See page 117*).



A NAVAL ACTION. *Painted*
by R. DODD (*See page 118*).

has possessed his infallible instinct for accentuating the proper aspects of the sea. He had the temperament, technique, imagination, knowledge, and patience through long years of watching; and that is why his marine paintings have never been surpassed.

Finally, there was the influence of John Constable (1776—1837), who was actuated primarily by the longing to reproduce the light of day in art. To him a landscape was beautiful only in regard to its light and shadow: not because of its literal subject. The play of light on water or trees, the wind-ruffled leaves and sunny fields showed Constable's independent investigation of his beloved Suffolk scenery. Certainly in his early years he learnt something from a study of Ruysdael, but he went direct to nature, discovered how to catch the breeze and put it on canvas, snapped the sunlight, and taught the artistic world the value of simple actuality. With what result? At home and in France he is the head of modern landscape painting, and with his dewes, soft breezes, and blooms has exercised a vast effect on the school of impressionists. It is his genuineness, in short, that has touched landscapists and sea-painters with a magic effect.

Such then were the influences at work during the eighteenth and first part of the nineteenth centuries; and this consideration will enable us to appreciate more comprehendingly the transition through which the sea-painters passed. As artists began to travel by sea, so they became attracted by some phase of sea life. Those, for example, who voyaged out to India in one of the H.E.I. Co.'s ships had ample time to learn enough about rigging and sails so as to avoid making themselves ridiculous in painting their experiences. William Daniell (born 1769) accompanied his uncle, Thomas Daniell (1748—1840) to India in 1784 and made sketches of the East Indiamen in which they travelled. There were men like R. Holman, of whose work there is very little about nowadays,



THE SHANNON-CHESAPEAKE ENGAGEMENT. *Painted by R. DODD. (See page 118).*



CAPTURE OF *RÉSISTANCE* AND *CONSTANCE*. *Painted by N. POCOCK. (See page 119).*

who painted a merchant ship with proper understanding of her sails and gear. His portrait of the *Nicholas Jane*, here reproduced, belongs to the year 1765 and may be well studied alongside Robert Dodd's *Queen Charlotte*, East Indiaman. In neither case is the water done with the slightest reverence and understanding that Gainsborough and Constable gave to their conception of landscape ; yet in each case there is atmosphere, and we know that we are looking at real ships.

Dodd got his first knowledge of ships through living his early life at Wapping. He began as a painter of landscape, and he has not hesitated here to suggest delicately, somewhat after the best Dutch manner, a landscape background of a distant shore. It was quite a favourite mannerism of these late eighteenth-century ship artists to show the same vessel hove-to at the left of the picture ; with the wind on the quarter in the centre ; and running before the wind, with stuns'ls set, at the extreme right of the painting. There is in one of the South Kensington galleries a painting by T. Luny, done in 1788, of the East Indiaman *Swallow*, which is of similar shape and composition to Dodd's *Queen Charlotte* picture ; and it shows yet again how slavish and unthinking was the artistic mind of that period. Originality was almost a crime, and at any rate something to be avoided as shocking to sleepy senses. But Dodd knew his public well enough, and gave them what they wanted. Sometimes he was dull and unimaginative to the point of annoyance. In such a painting as that with vessels off the Tower of London there is precious little life and character : the muddled mass of shipping to the right is anything but good work. Still, Dodd's colouring was pleasing ; he was kept pretty busy doing naval subjects such as the battles off St. Vincent and the Nile, Parker's victory in 1781, Rodney's victory of 1785, the Battle of Trafalgar, and an immense canvas of " The British Fleet

at Spithead getting under Sail" to escape the ship-of-the-line *Boyle*, which had caught fire. He also engraved and published some of his own productions, for he was living at the time when the nation relied on the Navy for its very existence, and every one who could afford to have a painting or print of those memorable engagements did so.

Here is an unidentified action painted by Dodd in 1802, seven years before he died. Such single-ship duels with shot-punctured sails were much relished by artists of this time as ideal subjects, so that another stereotyped mannerism was introduced and propagated. The historic *Shannon—Chesapeake* duel, with all its wealth of exciting picturesque incident, was a further example. Painters, engravers, and print-sellers all profited by the amount of emotional interest aroused thereby; yet in Dodd's accompanying representation he seems to have been at little trouble. There is no drama, the water is not sea but a meadow, and the ships are devoid of characterization.

Nicholas Pocock (1741—1821) was another artist who was lucky to have been born at the right time, and the value of his work is as high as it is because he was a sailor before he became a painter. His birthplace was Bristol which, for centuries since the time when John Cabot sailed from here in 1497 across the Atlantic to the day when the little *Great Western* steamer made her memorable trip in 1838, was famous for its maritime progress. From the Avon used to sail, too, those trading brigs which maintained connection between England and the West Indian possessions. Pocock came of a merchant family and himself was master of a Bristol vessel, but during his long voyages he amused himself by making numerous sketches. Finally he gave up his seafaring career, devoted himself entirely to art, won the favourable notice of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and in 1782 began exhibiting at the Royal



HYDRA AND FURET, 1806. *Painted*
by NICHOLAS POCOCK. (*See page 119*).



H.M. FRIGATE HYDRA AT BAGUR HARBOUR,
AUGUST, 1807. *By an unidentified painter. (See page 120).*



SHIP MAKING SAIL. *By
an unidentified painter. (See p. 121).*

Academy. Seven years later he took up residence in London, when he was kept busy depicting the naval battles of the period. The first of his pictures here shown is the capture of the two French frigates *Résistance* and *Constance*, by the British frigates *San Fiorenzo* and *Nymphe* off Brest, on March 9, 1797.

Now Pocock had a special reason for exulting in the loss of these two Frenchmen, for during the minor operations of that spring they had been off the Bristol Channel, having with *Vengeance* and the lugger *Vautour* landed on February 22 in Fisgard Bay some fifteen hundred armed men who were to destroy Bristol and then attack Liverpool. However the French failed ridiculously, the force being captured by Welsh yeomanry, militia, and fencibles. But on March 9, H.M.S. *San Fiorenzo* (36 guns) and H.M.S. *Nymphe* (also a 36) sighted *Résistance* (48 guns) and *Constance* (22) off Brest, making for harbour. Thereupon the British frigates attacked at once, although the Brest fleet was within visible distance. So fierce was the fight that after twenty minutes *Résistance* yielded, and *Constance* did the same after half an hour. The former was afterwards placed in the Royal Navy and given the name of *Fishguard* in commemoration of the landing.

In Pocock's picture he has shown the two duels going on, with the British frigate in each case to windward and pouring in a hot fire. The French coastline is delicately painted in the background. Two more historic ships of the French wars will be noticed in the next illustration by the same artist. *Hydra* was a British 38, which did uncommonly good work before and after Trafalgar. Early in October 1805, she was employed by Nelson as one of two frigates to keep watch off Cadiz, but in the following February Collingwood continued to maintain a blockade of Cadiz, when he learned that four of the enemy frigates which had survived Trafalgar were anxious to get to sea. He therefore withdrew his fleet a distance

of thirty miles, but left *Hydra* and *Moselle* (18) as the sole watch, with the hope that the enemy would sally forth. On the evening of February 26 four enemy frigates and the French brig *Furet* came out, but were sighted by *Hydra* and *Moselle*. The latter was presently despatched to get in touch with Collingwood, whilst *Hydra* carried on with the chase, so that next morning she overtook *Furet*, which was some distance astern of the four frigates. After being assailed with a broadside, *Furet* struck her colours and became *Hydra's* prize. Pocock has selected the moment when *Hydra* was still some distance away and to leeward of the French ship.

In the following year *Hydra*, still commanded by Captain George Mundy, again distinguished herself. On this occasion she drove three armed vessels into the Catalan port of Bagur and next day sent in her boats, whose crews landed and rushed the battery, and entered the town covered by *Hydra's* fire. Afterwards her people were taken on board again and the vessels brought away. The short, sharp episode caused in England no small amount of admiration, and the incident was painted by a contemporary artist but is here reproduced in contrast with Pocock's previous picture. The painter in this case has not been identified, but he shows *Hydra* anchored off Bagur's narrow, rocky harbour, which was defended by a tower and battery; and he has not slurred over details. The reflection of the frigate's hull in the still, calm water; the boat-booms, and even the anchor-buoy, have been all faithfully inserted.

Pocock was entirely self-taught, his work was careful and literal, yet he was not soul-inspired. He could give his patrons a large impressive canvas such as that here seen of "George III's Jubilee Review at Spithead, October 25, 1809," wherein the ship wearing the Admiralty flag at the fore and Union Jack at the



GEORGE III'S JUBILEE REVIEW AT SPITHEAD,
OCTOBER 25, 1809. *Painted by* NICHOLAS POCOCK.
(See page 120).

mizzen is being saluted, whilst a cutter with an Admiral's flag is coming up astern. In Pocock's sea battles we feel that he was wanting in emotion, and unable to appreciate the full dramatic significance. The interest is suppressed, he does not smell gunpowder, though the ships themselves are technically accurate. So in this Spithead Review, there is more heaviness than emerges from a dismal autumn day. But certain of his pictures were engraved and remain to this time as delightful aquatints in colour.

John Cleveley, who was born in London about 1745, is another artist who owed his ideas to having been brought up in Deptford Dockyard. His technique as an artist was learnt from Paul Sandby, the Royal Academician who has been called the "father of water-colour art." Cleveley began with views of the Thames as seen from Deptford, and then aspired to such works as "The King Reviewing his Fleet at Spithead." It was only occasionally he painted in oil, and in the special edition of this volume I have included one of these which is a delightful picture of an English brig getting under way. There is such similarity in its treatment when compared with the accompanying picture by an unidentified artist, showing a three-master making sail, that one can again perceive how style and convention persisted in place of independent observation. Whilst imitation was flattery, it was inimical to progress; and the most obedient conventionalist was cramping his own style without gaining any lasting benefit to himself or art. No wonder that Turner gave to marine painting such a startling shake-up. But Cleveley, who died in 1786 (and is not to be confused with the marine painter Robert Cleveley, who was born about 1767 and died in 1809), attained to a high standard in his particular sphere, for the reason that to good technique he brought varied experience. He possessed taste, his colour was superior to most of his contemporaries', his draughtsmanship was excellent,

and he could infuse life into his work. But he also travelled much and saw much. He became a draughtsman in the Royal Navy, in 1774 accompanied a voyage of discovery to the Arctic regions, and went with Sir Joseph Banks to Iceland. He exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1770 to 1786, and many of his drawings have been engraved.

In the following year William Anderson began to show his pictures under the same auspices and continued down till 1814. This marine painter was born in Scotland, the period of his life being from 1757 to 1837. Here was a case of a shipwright cultivating in his leisure hours a natural love for painting in oils and water-colours. Most of his work is small of size, but quite pleasing in its soft colouring. He was not wholly unaffected by van de Velde and Monamy, with his river scenes, calms, shipping, and boats, all neatly painted but devoid of much spirit. The first picture is another of those views off Greenwich, with the buildings in the background and a frigate anchored for the admiring crowds to see. Boats and barges make up the foreground. The frigate is the royal yacht *Royal George*, from whose mainmast flies the royal standard. In the colour reproduction the same artist has given a Dutch-like effect to another part of the Greenwich reach. The old traditions were dying very reluctantly.

We referred a little earlier to Thomas Luny, who also was an Academy exhibitor. Born in 1758, he lived for some time in that Ratcliffe Highway which is for ever associated with the history of Thames shipping. His range of subjects included naval battles, East Indiamen, sea-pieces, and coast scenes. Reproduced here will be found two events with which he was contemporary. The bombarding of Algiers in 1816, where the Dey had five hundred guns mounted and Algerine pirates still sheltered their frigates and corvettes, was the climax of many generations. Algiers had been for too long a blot on civilized Europe. Hither had our



SHIPPING OFF GREENWICH. *Painted by*
W. ANDERSON. (*See page 122*).



THE ROYAL YACHT ROYAL GEORGE OFF
GREENWICH. *Painted by* W. ANDERSON.
(See page 122).

Elizabethan ancestors been led into perpetual slavery, and sailormen on their lawful occasions had continued to be taken there out of their ships. Cromwell had sent Blake to cleanse this cesspool, but no effort had been successful. And now Admiral Lord Exmouth with his 100-gun flagship *Queen Charlotte*, five line-of-battle ships, five gunboats, four Dutch frigates, and two corvettes, made a determined onslaught. The fighting was so furious that *Impregnable* lost a hundred and fifty men within three hours. But finally one of the enemy's frigates was boarded and set on fire, the batteries were silenced, the Dey surrendered, and twelve hundred Christians were released from cruel slavery. To-day the former pirate stronghold is the scene where liners bring tourists to spend their hours in luxury hotels. Such is the change which can be worked by time. In Luny's painting he has well suggested the conflagration that was going on during the night of August 27, and we can almost hear the roar of cannon and smell the smoke. As we examine the three-decker to the left and pass our eyes over the other sailing ships, and then transfer our imagination to the North Sea a century later, it is instructive to realize the amazing change of the post-Jutland Fleet by comparison and in so brief a space of time. The Algiers operations seem to belong to the days not so very far removed from illuminated manuscripts and stained-glass windows.

Perhaps the final break with the past finds its expression after the Battle of Navarino. It is true that during the Burmese War of 1824—1826 steam war vessels were employed for the first time, but this was merely a hint of the change which was to come much later. In 1827 a joint action was arranged between England, France, and Russia, for the pacification of Greece, who was anxious to shake herself free of Turkey's control. Vice-Admiral Sir Edward Codrington, British Commander-in-Chief in the

Mediterranean, was sent with the French Admiral de Rigny, together with a Russian contingent to that Greek seaport of Navarino where in October of the year mentioned the 'Turco-Egyptian fleet was destroyed and thus was secured the independence of Greece. But the tactics of this battle are as old-fashioned as the ships themselves. The enemy's ships were moored in a semicircle of Navarino Bay and consisted of two 84's, one 76, as well as frigates, corvettes, brigs, and even five of those mediæval fire-ships. The Allied fleet anchored too, and some even furled their sails. But the action began timidly with only musketry fire, until one of the Egyptian ships fired a round shot at the French flagship, when the action became general. There was nothing scientific in this battle, which went on for four hours, with ship laid alongside her opponent. It was just blood and destruction, wreckage and slaughter, noise and smoke, and brute strength. Both aloft and in hull the ships of both sides suffered considerably, and Luny has been able to suggest with considerable spirit some of the tense excitement. The rigging of the British vessel lying between two of the enemy with men in the tops, spars crashing down, guns belching death at close quarters, and general destruction everywhere around, is done by an artist who specialized in this hectic work. "The scene of wreck and devastation which presented itself" at the end of those four hours, wrote Codrington himself, "was such as has been seldom before witnessed. As each ship of our opponents became effectually disabled, such of her crew as could escape from her endeavoured to set her on fire; and it is wonderful how we avoided the effects of their successive and awful explosions."

Luny lived to the age of seventy-nine, and died at Teignmouth in Devonshire the year Queen Victoria came to the throne, yet we can already see in his Navarino picture the change which was about to come over nineteenth-century art as over ships as well.



SHIP OF THE LINE AND LUGGER IN ENGLISH CHANNEL. *By an unidentified painter. Early Nineteenth Century.*
(See page 125).



BOMBARDMENT OF ALGIERS, 1816.
Painted by T. LUNY. (See page 122).



BATTLE OF NAVARINO, 1827.
Painted by T. LUNY. (See page 123).

But the old-fashioned methods died slowly, the prejudice against originality was as keen at the Admiralty as it was at the Academy. In the accompanying colour reproduction, by an unidentified artist of the early nineteenth century, with its ill-rigged fishing lugger, its quaint ship-of-the-line and beamy cutter, all representative types then to be seen at the eastern end of the English Channel, we can still perceive some trace of seventeenth-century art standards. But the long years of fighting were coming to an end, the men who had flourished by painting battle scenes now had to adapt themselves to fresh conditions. Trafalgar still continued as a theme amongst the least progressive artists, but the unfortunate war of 1812 with the United States; the Chinese War of 1839; incidents connected with the capture of slave schooners and brigs off the West African coast; operations in the Baltic during 1854—1855; the Crimean campaign with its bombardments; the capture of the Taku Forts in 1858; and such episodes in American history as centred round “Merrimac,” “Monitor,” “Kearsage” and “Alabama,” were all opportunities for marine artists to express themselves.

But otherwise these painters addressed themselves to glorification of the sailing ship. The massive East Indiamen, the stout Revenue cutters, the Trinity House vessels, the much-canvassed yachts of the Royal Yacht Club, the naval brigs, West Indiamen, the Thames racing craft of the Cumberland Fleet, the attacks by pirates on East Indiamen, the peaceful scenes of merchant vessels fitting out inside some newly-built dock, the New York packets, the whaling ships of England and New England, the Australian emigrant ships, the clipper ships, repeated portraits of Nelson’s *Victory*, and some occasions when individual men-of-war or squadrons were depicted under way—these became the sources for marine artists to show their skill.

Thomas Whitcombe, who was born in 1763 and exhibited at the

Academy from 1783 till 1824, is an excellent instance of such an artist. His vessels are well drawn, he possessed accurate knowledge concerning them and their ways, and there was in him a delight of seafaring. In the first picture showing the Dover smack *Mary* off Shakespeare cliff, with the old Dover harbour just opening, we have one of those glimpses of the unhurried days that preceded the steam age. The long yard for the cutter's squaresail looks strange to our modern eyes, but this is just how it was carried. With this pleasing picture it is interesting to compare Whitcombe's "Trinity House Cutter and Revenue Cutter," which has been reproduced in colour photogravure for the special edition. The white cliffs and shipping of Kent were part of Whitcombe, and he could have gone on repeating himself; their value to us is as much historical as tinged with regret that the Downs no longer witness such interesting craft. Nor did he confine himself to home waters and local craft of the fore-and-aft rig. Storms, big ships, harbours, and naval actions all came within his efforts, and here we have a breezy canvas showing three of the Honourable East India Company's fine ships, *Minerva*, *Charles Grant*, and *Scaleby Castle*, off the Cape of Good Hope. There is real portraiture here, no sailor could adversely criticize the ship in the foreground, which is just in the act of going about on the other tack. And the very sea is a vast improvement on the work of those conventional painters of the past. We are not yet in the generation which made a regular practice of studying waves as separate characters, nor has Turner's influence begun to make itself felt. In Whitcombe's picture of the capture of H.M.S. *Macedonian* by the United States frigate *United States*, on October 25, 1812, we can perceive what bad work even so capable an artist could produce. Both ships lack life, the sea is thoroughly unsatisfactory, the sails are characterless, and there is no atmosphere.



SMACK MARY OFF DOVER. *Painted*
by THOMAS WHITCOMBE. (*See page 126.*)



H.E.I. CO.'S SHIPS MINERVA, SCALE-
BY CASTLE AND CHARLES GRANT.
Painted by T. WHITCOMBE. (*See page 126.*)

The incident is that when Captain John Surman Carden was in command of H.M.S. *Macedonian* of 38 guns. This frigate had a crew of 254, and the weight of her broadside was 528 lbs. She was off the Azores when she fell in with the American frigate *United States*, which had a crew of 474 and a broadside of 864 lbs. The latter was the most powerful of all American frigates, but in spite of the disparity between the two ships Captain Carden felt it his duty to attack. The result was foregone, and Commodore Decatur, the American commanding officer, had the fighting all his own way; for *Macedonian's* mizzenmast was carried away together with topmasts, whilst his lower masts were damaged and about a hundred men killed or wounded. After two hours of this *Macedonian* was so disabled that she had to strike her colours. When Captain Carden and his brother officers were taken aboard *United States* he found that not one man of the latter's crew had served less than five years in the British Navy, and some of them had actually manned Nelson's barge of *Victory*. Such an episode was thus not without pictorial interest for both English-speaking peoples.

Mather Brown was an American artist who was born about the middle of the eighteenth century and probably at Boston; but he came to England when quite young and was a pupil of his fellow-countryman Benjamin West. (The latter was born in Pennsylvania during 1738, settled in London about 1764, became an historical painter to the King, succeeded no less a person than Sir Joshua Reynolds as President of the Royal Academy, died in 1820, and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral.) Now Brown was really not a marine painter but a portraitist, and exhibited at the Academy from 1782 till his death in 1831. Such notable persons as George III, Queen Charlotte, and many distinguished naval and military officers, including Rodney and Cornwallis, all sat to him,

but his art never reached a high standard, though occasionally the portraits that he did were good. For a time he had a large house in Cavendish Square, but his latter days were tragic. Poverty overtook him, he became careless in his dress, and he was almost an imbecile when death came to him in Newman Street. In the accompanying picture we can see the emphasis laid on human rather than ship characters. Just exactly what naval action this is we know not, but Brown has thinly disguised his ignorance of nautical details by the employment of smoke and shadow. The public of that time cared more about a good stirring story than accuracy of detail, with spars falling into the sea and plenty of incident. An unknown artist has done more sketchily a similar kind of subject in the next example ; for the fact is that the national mind had been so accustomed to unending wars that it needed a long while before the peaceful merchantman got right into the front rank of marine art.

The " Capture of *Sans Culotte* by *Blanche*," on December 30, 1793, was one of those episodes during the War of the French Revolution, 1793—1801. The former was a 22-gun ship, whilst the British vessel was a 32, under the command of Captain C. Parker. The picture here given in colour is not a great work of art : the water is still of that school which was content to paint sea according to an accepted formula, and this is another of those duel subjects with holed canvas, smoke, and unimpressive ships that would appeal to shellbacks more than art connoisseurs. It is, however, unique as being the work of a British naval officer. Thomas Yates, who painted it, was born in the latter half of the eighteenth century, served for some time in the Royal Navy which he entered in 1782, rose to the rank of Lieutenant, and practised art as an amateur. He attained a sufficiently high standard for his pictures to be accepted by the Royal Academy between 1788



CAPTURE OF THE SANS CULOTTE BY
H.M.S. BLANCHE, 1793. *Painted by* LIEUTENANT
THOMAS YATES, R.N. (*See page 128*).



CAPTURE OF H.M.S. MACEDONIAN.
Painted by T. WHITCOMBE. (See page 126.)



H.M.S. MEDIATOR. *Painted*
by T. WISHART. (See page 129.)



NAVAL ACTION. *Painted by*
MATHER BROWN. (*See page 128.*)



NAVAL ACTION. *By an unidentified painter. (See page 128).*

and 1794; he also published a series of engraved drawings illustrating celebrated naval actions. But he was another of those temperamental painters, whose life ended sadly as so many careers in those wicked old days did. For father he had Richard Yates, the well-known comedian, and for wife he had that celebrated actress, Mrs. Yates; but he died in 1796 as a result of being shot during a dispute about the possession of a house left to him by his uncle.

But if we look for marine art at its worst, just before the eighteenth century came to a close, we shall find it in such a picture as that which T. Wishart painted. The incident was one that should have inspired a true artist to rise to the occasion, and is one of those naval affairs which come under minor operations though exhibiting no little determination. It was on December 12, 1782, that Captain the Hon. John Luttrell, R.N., whilst in command of H.M.S. *Mediator*, a 44, came in sight of five French and American vessels, bound for the West Indies. The latter shortened sail and waited, but *Mediator* bore down first on *Alexandre*, then, having captured her, she continued her chase and took both *Eugène* and *Menagère*. The whole thing was done without the loss of a British man. In Wishart's picture all six ships are shown in a hard, dull manner with absence of imaginative effort, and sailing through a medium that bears no resemblance to water. It is just such a painting as this which makes one respect the courage and sincerity of Turner when he went straight to nature, learned first to comprehend, and then how to present in pigment, real salty waves with motion and meaning of their own. But a brighter epoch was dawning, the eighteenth century had to make way for the more enterprising and more intelligent nineteenth, even if the changes came gradually rather than suddenly.

CHAPTER VIII

EARLY NINETEENTH-CENTURY SEA PAINTING

WHEN British marine painting at last acquired its distinctive character in the first part of the nineteenth century, there still remained easily recognizable traces of its parentage until the days of the clipper ships. From Holland had been received and modified, though not stifled, that strong naturalism which became so conspicuous a feature of such work as Clarkson Stanfield produced. English scenery could not supply restful silvery canals, avenues of poplars, broad estuaries, and windmill-dotted meadows with such readiness as the Netherlands were capable of ; yet there was always the white-cliffed coast at the busiest end of the English Channel as a background for shipping, and there were all the numerous ports around the whole of Great Britain, providing far greater variety than ever Holland or Belgium could give to their artists.

But the influence of Wilson, Gainsborough, and Constable was able to enthuse nineteenth-century painters of landscape and seascape with the desire to render the outward forms of nature not merely faithfully but intimately. The reverence for tradition gives way to a respect for sincerity ; subjects must be painted not according to rule but observation. Just as Constable, whenever he addressed himself to painting some scene, was careful first to divest himself of the recollection of having ever seen a picture, so the best English marine artists began to depict only their personal



CUTTER YACHT GAZELLE OFF COWES.
Painted by J. C. SCHETKY. (See page 134.)



TRINITY HOUSE 'SCHOONER. *Painted*
by J. C. SCHETKY. (See page 134.)

impressions, yet with a fervour that belongs to free men and cannot be experienced by slaves to convention. Thus, in place of the stereotyped calms or storms, in place of the too oft-repeated compositions, we now get any kind of ship painted in any kind of sea as she looked at a given moment. Standardization disappears, but instead we find a snapshot of the sea and ship according to the mood in which they, no less than the painter, then happened to be. In a word, the outstanding feature of the new English school was the penetrating desire to get right through the hard crust of external form to the very soul of ships and sea as appearing to each individual pair of eyes. And with the numerical increase of sailing ships, the rising prosperity of shipbuilders and shipowners following the date when the Honourable East India Company lost its monopoly, there was a still greater demand for any artist who could satisfy the critical requirements of shipmasters, builders, and owners. Presently, too, with the growing popularity of yachting as a sport, the triumph of the clipper ships, and the advent of steamship companies, these comparatively few marine artists experienced a period of particular encouragement; and it might have continued to be a longer time but for the fact that photography so rapidly developed.

These early nineteenth-century sea painters, with greater diversity of subjects because of selected, rather than accepted, moments; with all the value of atmosphere, brilliant glints, noon-day glare, or play of lights, were able to get far more out of the same material that was available for their ancestors. Every hour of the day or night, every variation of light, every attitude in which a ship might find herself with regard to wind and wave, now seemed fitting, suitable, and asking to be painted. But apart from Turner, the English sea-painters took only few liberties: they idealized so slightly, they exaggerated and transposed so reluctantly, they

invented hardly at all. On the contrary, there was so much public interest now in shipping, there was such a lot of talk about ruling the seas, so many improvements in naval architecture daily being discussed, that it sufficed to show vessels just as they actually were afloat, in seas that were perfectly natural. The result is that nowadays the sea is painted in its every mood, with all its varying shades and colours. Thus the artist who goes sketching from a Cornish cliff will get totally different results from what his brother practitioner will find in the yellow North Sea. Or again, to quote a modern example, Napier Hemy's coastwise sparkling West Country waves would never do as the basis for East-coast drifters : whereas, in the wicked past, painters had neither the thought nor the inquiring patience to discriminate between one class of sea and another.

It is true that such a popular painter as Sir Augustus Wall Callcott (1779—1844), who did his best pictures between 1812 and 1824, would nowadays not merit the esteem which he received by his contemporaries who called him the English Claude. Even Ruskin placed him far below Turner, accused him of showing no enjoyment in his work but mediocrity. "He painted everything tolerably, and nothing excellently." And notwithstanding at least one valuable marine painting, Ruskin believed that in the future Callcott could "have no place among those considered representatives of the English school." But Callcott was still too much under the worst influences of the past, and painted seas "where all the light is white, and all the shadows grey, where no distinction is made between water and foam, or between real and reflective shadow, and which are generally without evidence of the artist's having ever seen the sea."

In the National Gallery, London, are a couple of marine paintings by John Sell Cotman (1782—1842), though he is essentially

a water-colour artist. This member of the Norwich school used to study at Cromer the waves, beach craft, and cliffs ; and at Great Yarmouth the shipping. Turner thought so highly of his work that he obtained him the appointment as drawing-master to King's College, London. But water-colour painting came into general use only in the nineteenth century, and as a thoroughly English medium. It is because of its rapid-drying properties that it was so suitable for catching the ever-changing subjects of marine matters. David Cox (1783—1859) was another teacher of drawing and a water-colour painter, who, however, was concerned rather with landscape than with shipping. His misty subtleties of coast are, of course, masterly, his rain-cloud effects and stormy skies are full of power. Antony Vandyke Copley Fielding (1787—1855), another of these water-colourists, was unsurpassed for his interpretation of mist and clouds. He was limited in his range yet animated with pure love of truth, and no one better understood how to interpret those clouds that were about to pour forth a deluge.

But in the strict sense of marine painters we have to consider such a contemporary as John Christian Schetky (1778—1874), whose work is marked by that sunlight and atmosphere which came as the result of going to nature direct. He was not a consummate artist, but he was minutely accurate and painstaking. Born at Edinburgh, but afterwards settling in the south of England, he painted Leith smacks, English brigs and schooners, Solent yachts, British men-of-war with a commendable thoroughness. At one time he was Professor of Civil Drawing at the Royal Military College, Great Marlow ; also at the Royal Naval College, Portsmouth ; and at the East India College, Addiscombe. These three duties covered forty-seven years of his life. But he was appointed, further, painter in water-colours to William, Duke of Clarence ; marine painter to George IV, William IV, and Queen Victoria.

Such items as the Battle of Trafalgar, or Admiral Sir Charles Paget's frigate *Endymion* relieving a French man-of-war ashore on a rock-bound coast, are typical of his historical themes.

We have before us in this chapter two of his oil-paintings, which indicate his reaction to the interesting craft of his time. The first shows a Trinity House schooner, with her owners' flag flying at the fore. There is understandable life in both ship and sea. There is atmosphere, and we breathe the sunlit salt air. Schetky has certainly learnt something from the principles of the great landscapists, and this faithful approach to his subject is entirely forgetful of any van de Velde or Monamy. The sails, the cordage, the spars, and even the figures on deck have a particular character and vitality. Still more intriguing is the delightful Solent scene off Cowes, which doubtless belongs to the time when he was living at Portsmouth. Here we have real ships, real clouds, genuine light bursting over the Medina River and adjacent craft. In the background to the right is a full-rigged ship, with a schooner coming out from the Isle of Wight shore : but in the foreground Schetky has given us an actual portrait of the cutter *Gazelle*, owned by Mr. Owen Williams, M.P. She is flying the burgee of the Royal Yacht Club, now better known as the Royal Yacht Squadron, which ever since 1829 (except for the period of the Great War, 1914—1919) has had the right by Admiralty warrant to fly the White Ensign. It was four years later that the Royal Yacht Club, by King William's wish, became the Royal Yacht Squadron.

Schetky has depicted with great truthfulness the typical heavy cutter of her time, such as was used by yachtsmen, smugglers, or Revenue crews alike. Of big displacement, with a long bowsprit, an enormous spread of canvas not too well cut, these vessels were better for sea-keeping than for speed. They needed plenty of hands, but wages were low : they were built solidly and to rule-of-



CUTTER DOVE ENTERING CALAIS.
By an unidentified painter. (See page 135).

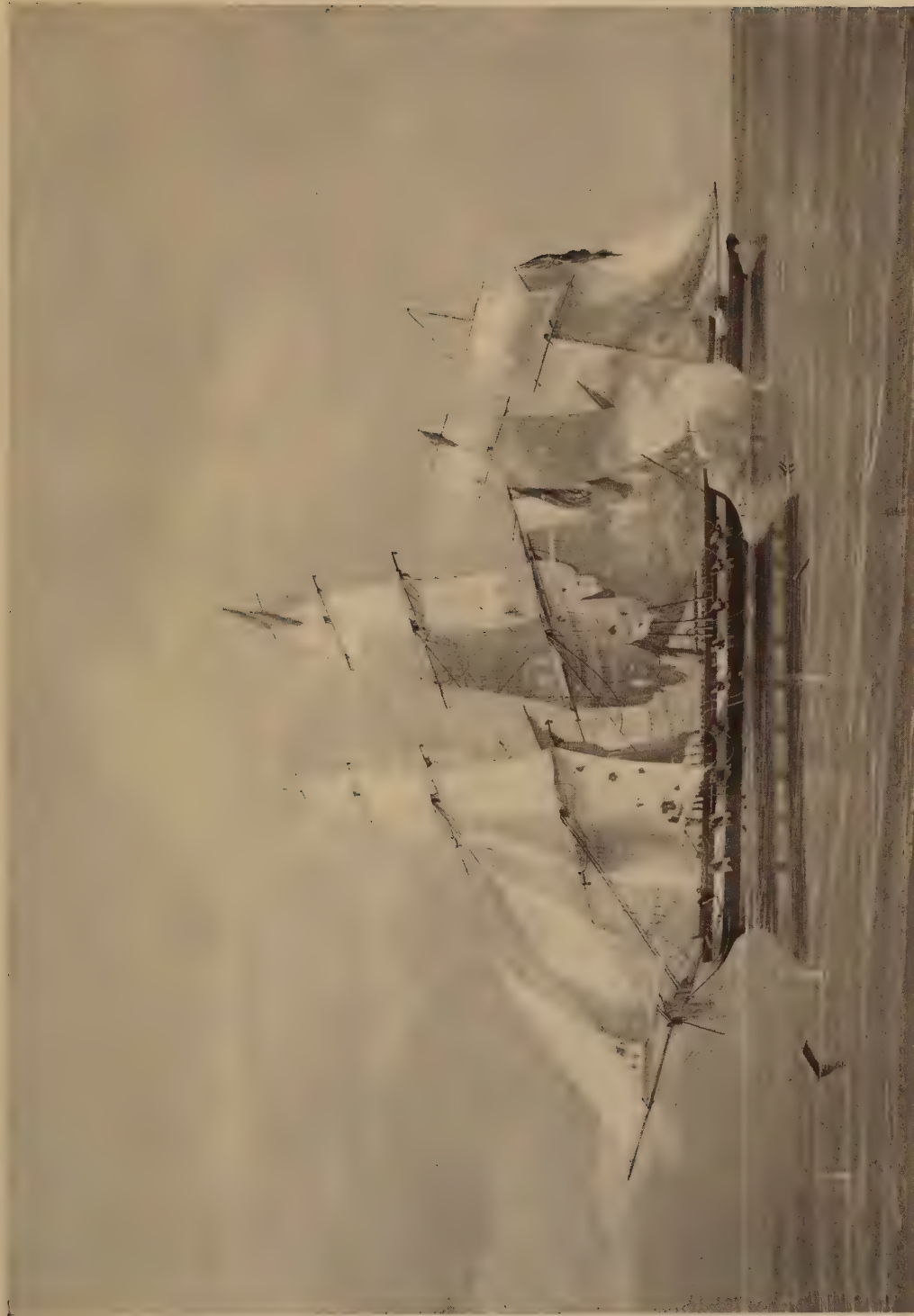
thumb, but material was cheap and naval architecture was still hardly a science. The artist has not excelled himself in his manner of painting the water, but at least he has succeeded in presenting *Gazelle* as wonderfully life-like; and those of our present generation who gain their knowledge of yachts chiefly from the gaffless triumphs of design and construction belonging to some metre-class, may well marvel that only a century ago the *Gazelle* type was the crack cutter expression. Therefore Schetky has laid us under an obligation by setting down for all time a phase that will never be repeated. An excellent bit of colouring is that by an unknown artist who was certainly well endowed to undertake such a picture. Here we have the cutter *Dove* close-hauled in a fresh breeze stemming the strong tide that rushes across Calais Harbour, into which she is about to enter. Thoroughly to appreciate this painting one has to imagine how some of those less capable men of the early eighteenth century would have interpreted the incident. But those of us who have taken a cutter into Calais and experienced just these same conditions of wind and sea, realize that this artist was painting from actuality and not convention. There is suspense in the picture, the cutter may not succeed in laying her course, and (like many a Calais fisherman to-day) be swept past the entrance dangerously near to the piers. In the squall which is coming off the land, the short nasty sea, the small jib, the lowered squaresail yard and reefed mainsail there is clear evidence that this painter, whoever he may have been, had made most detailed study. The whole episode here depicted is just a slice of seafaring life.

It is only by studying these pictures individually, by pondering over their details and comparing them with known facts, that we can ever appreciate rightly a man's work. On the walls of a public gallery there is so much to distract the attention that one can never do honourable justice to each item: to me the endeavour of looking

at so many different paintings thus collected always seems comparable to the effort of listening to many orchestras, each of which is playing its own music. Concentration of the senses under those conditions is impossible. And especially with such an intricate consideration as ship-painting is undivided attention essential, unless we are to fail utterly in penetrating what was by the artist intended. Of course, it is obvious that there is some inspiration of Turner in this present picture, both in the selected subject and in the manner of presenting the sea. But there is no servile copying, no unthinking obedience to the methods of another technician.

If we wonder why it is that there have been so few artists devoting themselves to marine painting exclusively, the answer is not hard to find. The surface of the sea is never in repose, though a landscape is affected only by sun or darkness. Those artists who chose some windless day at sea, or the occasion when a steady gale had set in, selected the easier aspects of their task. Otherwise they had to take a fleeting impression and work away on that, with all the complexities of changing composition, colour, transparency and shadows. A row of hills or a green hedgerow may look the same for the whole of one summer's afternoon until sunset tinges everything. Not so, however, the sea, where a flat unruffled surface may be changed by a sudden squall into hills and valleys. The relation between sky and the hues of sea is something far closer than between a blue arc of heaven and a meadow. Every one knows that those patches and variations of the water are not solely caused by the sea's bed, but by the sun and clouds. This apparently erratic irresponsibility demands both patience and that long observing study which alone will give the artist an apprehension, though never a complete comprehension, of this majestic force which is so self-willed.

Turner's attitude of watching, learning, analysing, working out



H.M.S. BUZZARD ENGAGING EL FORMIDABLE.
Painted by W. J. HUGGINS. (See page 138).

a synthesis for himself, is the only way to success. Nothing is more dangerous in this respect than a little knowledge, for it tempts a careless, negligent man to associate certain states of the sea with such atmospheric conditions as would never be found simultaneously in nature. This fallacy of superimposing sky on sea, or ship on water, belongs to the trick studio and not to vivid reality. Consistent observation spread over a long period is therefore one of the first essentials demanded of the marine painter. Just as every perfect play is a separate problem worked out independently through every sense and character to the final *dénouement* ; so every sincerely painted sea picture is a particular problem of restless water, changing wind, moving hull. To paint a curling crested wave, for instance, is not to invent something out of one's imagination, but to set down with recognizable individuality a flash of nature adequately perceived. From the froth and turmoil and seemingly undesigned confusion of watery waste, the artist is expected to produce a meaning and rhythmic order ; for the pieces are merely part of the mighty whole.

To this task must be added that ability to paint the ship, with rigging and sails and spars not merely accurately delineated, but modified in accordance and sympathy with the conditions of the moment derived from wave and wind. Every child knows that to draw the simplest beach boat is to try his draughtsmanship severely, for the curves are difficult in their simple beauty. But when it comes to satisfying the professional eye of a sailor, it requires no ordinary ability for painting a ship under way. We have already considered for ourselves some lamentable illustrations of incompetent artists attempting tasks that belonged only to those who had spent years studying ships and their rigs.

Even those marine painters who had been themselves sailors could do indifferent work at times, and the next four pictures form

interesting contrasts. These are by William John Huggins, who was born in 1781 and died in 1845; he is thus well able to represent the first half of the nineteenth century. His early life was spent afloat in the service of the Honourable East India Company. In spite of this his seas are disappointingly characterless, and his skies defective in colour; but no one will deny that he could put on canvas real ships, whose hulls and snowy sails satisfied seafaring critics. Having come ashore and settled in Leadenhall Street, that is to-day so closely associated with shipping, he began to do portraits of those H.E.I.C. vessels with which he was familiar. These found so much appreciation that the remuneration enabled him to keep on, and even to improve his technique. Thus it was that his paintings won for him repute, and he was admitted to the Academy, where he exhibited for several years. In 1834 he was appointed marine painter to William IV, for whom he made three large pictures of the Battle of Trafalgar. These are now at Hampton Court.

We think of Huggins, then, doing East and West Indiamen; naval ships such as the 120-gun *Howe* lying off Greenwich, or the 52-gun *Winchester* at sea off the Eddystone; or Revenue cutters such as the 72-ton *Prince George*; or battle-pieces. In the first of our examples (which is one of the many from which engravings were made) we have the incident of H.M.S. *Buzzard* engaging the Spanish slaver *El Formidable* off the Old Calabar River on December 17, 1834. Such exploits by British men-of-war against the brigs and schooners of Spanish nationality engaged in a detestable trade found every sympathy at home and provided fresh subjects for marine painters, so that there was a ready demand for prints after these pictures. The Anglo-French and Anglo-American wars having ended, these minor operations off the African coast were really fortunate for artists who lacked those bigger



WEST INDIAMAN FLORA. *Painted*
by W. J. HUGGINS. (See page 139).

opportunities of the previous century. In this painting, with its pleasing transparent colouring, though weak sea, we recognize at once that the artist was no stranger to ship architecture, and he has endowed the brig in the foreground with full vitality.

The West Indiaman *Flora* is shown off the Lizard both before the wind and on a wind, in accordance with the contemporary convention. Huggins has not omitted to give her both stuns'ls and skysails, but it is the hull which has interested him most. This was the kind of portrait which shipmasters and owners commissioned not for artistic merit but for an accurate souvenir, and Huggins was just the man for the job. The Nelson tradition, however, still occupied the public mind in songs, drama, and art, so Huggins could not resist the temptation to supply the desired article. He has shown the battered units after the Battle of Trafalgar rolling in the Atlantic swell with spars shot away and canvas punctured badly. There is nothing noble about this painting, though the subject suggested possibilities. Yet at least it is noticeable that the artist has taken trouble to give the right kind of sea, where earlier painters would have been content with short choppy waves.

But Huggins has again given us inferior work in that incident which occurred during the war with the United States. There is absence of enthusiasm, only a half-hearted attempt to convey the story ; yet it is not wholly unsatisfactory, for Huggins at his worst was still capable of making a ship's hull interesting. The recorded event is as follows. On June 21, 1812, the American squadron under Captain John Rodgers, consisting of *President*, *United States* (both 44's), *Congress* (38), *Hornet* (18), and *Argus* (16), went on a cruise with the hope of encountering the British homeward-bound West Indies fleet, and on June 23 came in contact with the British frigate *Belvidera*, which is seen to the extreme left of the

accompanying picture. This was a 36, and her commanding officer, Captain R. Byron, made off before the wind, whilst the five American ships gave chase.

Captain Rodgers' own unit *President* led the way followed by *Congress*, and at noon had got to within three miles of *Belvidera*, who cleared for action. At 4.30 p.m. *President* opened fire from the starboard side at *Belvidera's* stern, as observable in the painting ; but one of *President's* guns burst, blew up the forecastle deck, and caused sixteen casualties, including among them Rodgers, whose leg was broken. *Belvidera* increased this number by opening fire and maintaining it from the stern, but after lightening his ship of superfluous gear Byron managed to increase speed so effectively that he drew right away, escaped, and reached Halifax four days later. There was an especial reason why Huggins should depict this incident, for it was the very first action of that unfortunate war.

Now contemporary with Huggins was William Clarkson Stanfield (1793—1867), who painted the salt sea and sailing ships with fidelity and without sentimentality. He was one of the first to establish firmly the English school of marine art on the basis of truth, and henceforth there was no possibility of archaic convention surviving. Still, in his well-known "Entrance to the Zuyder Zee," which is in the Tate Gallery, London, he has painted Dutch craft and water in a manner that is reminiscent of the best seventeenth-century Dutch masters ; with the difference that Stanfield has absorbed the spirit rather than the literal application of a past standard. The clouds and stormy skies, the boisterous short seas off the Texel, just appealed to him so that he painted what he saw.

But a thorough knowledge of sea and ships from actual personal experience gave him, as it gave to Huggins, a great superiority over many other men who toyed with the marine idea. Like Copley Fielding he emphasized the character of clouds ; unlike Turner he



AFTER TRAFALGAR. *Painted*
by W. J. HUGGINS. (*See page 139*).



THE BELVIDERA INCIDENT. *Painted*
by W. J. HUGGINS. (*See page 139*).

did not stress the mysterious majesty of the sea. Stanfield, so to speak, was the least self-conscious and the most sincere marine artist, who went about his work with unprejudiced eyes and without affection of any sort. If he was the first English realist, this just happened because it had to be. The ship was shown with all her detail, but without humbug or a suspicion of insincerity. And whilst this freedom from exaggeration on the one hand, and from sketchy incompleteness on the other, are so noticeable, it is all done with an absence of effort. Truth, power, knowledge, carefulness are all there in his works; and there is no attempt to conceal ignorance by tricks of the brush. He takes an open-air view of his vessels and water without any technical fear, yet without any impressive charm. Sea, sky, and ships are amazingly accurate, but lacking in emotional appeal. There is defining character even in his coastal scenery as there is in his vessels' anatomy and equipment.

But his cold, calculating correctness was possibly the result of his early environment. From his Irish parents he inherited his artistic sense, though Sunderland's northern latitude was his birth-place. He began his career by going to sea, but an accident which happened whilst in the Navy disabled him from active service when he was still young. Having become acquainted with Douglas Jerrold, he began to paint stage scenery first in Edinburgh and then in London. Next he commenced exhibiting pictures, went sketching in Holland as well as Italy, was elected an A.R.A. in 1832, and an R.A. three years later. Thus at the time when Landseer was occupying a unique position by painting those then popular (but now rather boring) animals, Stanfield was respected as the corresponding exponent of marine art.

William IV commissioned him to paint the ceremony of opening the new London Bridge, the United Service Club commissioned him to paint the Battle of Trafalgar, though Stanfield's work can

be seen in the Tate Gallery by such different pictures as the Lake of Como and a Venetian canal. Living at this time was also William Havell (1782—1857), whose father was a drawing-master at Reading. Now William specialized in landscape painting and first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1804, but twelve years later went out as draughtsman with Lord Amherst's embassy to China in the *Alceste*. In 1817 he proceeded to India and remained there till 1825. Havell was one of the founders of the English water-colour school, but I have included one of his oil pictures, in which his characteristic delight in sunshine effect will be particularly noticed. The period is somewhere about 1815, and the picture shows a sailing match between yachts of the Cumberland Society on the Thames. The Cumberland Society existed from 1755 to 1821, and in the first of these years was the first Thames "regatta," or yacht race meeting, though in the time of the Stuarts sailing matches were not altogether unknown on this river. According to an advertisement of 1788, announcing a meeting of members of the Cumberland Fleet, "gentlemen who enter their boats" were required to attend at the same time and draw lots for situations at starting, but were also to produce their "licence from the Admiralty or other proofs" of ownership. In 1821 the Cumberland Society became H.M. Coronation Sailing Society, and then till 1830 it was known as the Thames Yacht Club. From that day to this its title has been the Royal Thames Yacht Club. Whilst now the Royal Yacht Squadron alone of all the clubs has the right to fly the White Ensign, it is interesting to remember that on February 19, 1835, an Admiralty warrant was granted to the Royal Thames Yacht Club authorizing its vessels to carry a White Ensign without a red cross but bearing the Union Jack in the upper canton, with also in the fly a crown over the letters R.T.Y.C. in red.

In Havell's picture the leading yacht has a swallow-tailed flag



SAILING MATCH BETWEEN YACHTS OF
THE CUMBERLAND SOCIETY. *Painted by*
WILLIAM HAVELL. (*See page 142*).

with six black balls, whilst the second craft has only one, and another is shown with three. These numbers corresponded with the name of the yacht, though the numbers appear to have been changed from year to year. It is not claimed that this oil painting is a great work of art, but historically it is of considerable importance. Havell's oil pictures are unfortunately rather yellow in tone, and there is a certain monotony, but he knew something about ships and small craft, nor does any of these yachts offend the technical eye.

We have had occasion more than once to refer to the Honourable East India Company, that mighty and prosperous corporation which for many generations was the backbone of the English Mercantile Marine. Now one of the risks which their well-found ships, with their rich cargoes, had to take was not merely in respect of such a naval nation as France, but against native pirates who roamed the Indian Ocean and hung about those routes likely to prove profitable. Thomas Buttersworth, the marine painter who was exhibiting at the Royal Academy from 1813 to 1827, has in the accompanying illustration put on record one of such incidents, when the H.E.I.C. brig *Aurora* was able to beat off an attack of piratical craft under the leadership of the Sultan of Sanbas in the year 1812. The *Aurora* is to the right of the centre, and is flying the H.E.I. Co.'s ensign, which consisted of the Union Jack in the upper canton next to the staff, the rest of the flag being a series of red and white stripes.

From paintings and contemporary prints, and also from models, we are pretty familiar with the appearance of the old East Indiamen, but the pictures of West Indiamen are not so numerous. In 1783 there was born at Bristol, the port so famous for these trans-Atlantic vessels, Joseph Walter, who became a marine artist and used to exhibit at the Royal Academy from 1836 to 1847. The Bristol Gallery contains such examples of his work as that historic little

steamer *Great Western* during her fifth voyage from Bristol to New York ; that other early steamer, the *Great Britain* ; “ Ships on the Avon ” ; the “ Port of Bristol.” But for the present we may content ourselves with the Macpherson painting, which was done in 1834, and shows four of these West Indiamen at Bristol refitting. This again is one of those pleasing subjects which, with the advance of time, become of such historical value when we attempt to reconstruct shipping of the past. But E. W. Cooke (1811—1880) has, among the multitude of his pictures, also left us representations of these West Indiamen, which have already become so familiar by reproduction that we require no more than to mention the fact. Cooke’s “ Dutch Boats in a Calm,” which is preserved in the Tate Gallery, reminds us that he was of Dutch descent and paid altogether fifteen visits to Holland. But he inherited the artistic sense from his father, who was well known by his engravings of Turner’s pictures.

Nicholas Matthew Condry (1799—1857) was born and died in Plymouth where he availed himself of the interesting ship-subjects that were always at hand, from which such men as Edward Duncan used to make aquatints. Condry was a painter of landscape as well as of sea and ships, but in the accompanying item we have none of those charming bits of Plymouth Sound’s green shores and cliffs which he so loved to introduce. Here is no calm or anchored frigate, with fishermen in the foreground hauling a net. The incident depicted is another of those connected with the suppression of the slave trade. To the left of the picture is seen the 16-gun brig *Acorn*, Commander John Adams, and she is running before the wind with every possible bit of canvas set, including t’gallants and stuns’ls, in order to try and overhaul the Spanish *Gabriel*, which was one of the most notorious piratical slavers of her time. A ding-dong fight is proceeding, already H.M.S. *Acorn* has received shot holes in one of her stuns’ls, but she has inflicted even greater



H.E.I.C. BRIG AURORA BEATING OFF PIRATICAL CRAFT. *Painted by T. BUTTERSWORTH. (See page 143).*



WEST INDIAMEN AT BRISTOL. *Painted by J. WALTER. (See page 144).*

damage on *Gabriel*, who will presently become *Acorn's* prize. The date of this little affair was July 6, 1841, and Commander Adams was one of the most successful naval officers engaged in this suppression, for he was able to make so many captures that he accounted for over three thousand tons of slave shipping.

But by this year of progress a great change was already coming over the European mind ; English taste was to become less insular now that travel on the Continent and across the seas became more frequent. Artists, in particular, as soon as their purses permitted, would make their grand tour through the galleries of France, Italy, and Holland, bringing back both fresh scenes in their minds and new influences. Still this very insularity, and reliance on the ocean highways as a means of wealth, was the actual cause of English marine painters far surpassing any other artists of any nationality who were attracted. Not even Dutchmen could teach the English school anything about the manner of depicting water or ships ; but they could add fresh ideas and suggestions.

At the same time the age-old prejudice against the sea was by no means dead, and it was only the glory of sailing ships, already rapidly approaching their climax, which gave marine artists adequate work now that the monotony of peace afloat had set in. There were those men who painted pleasant coast scenes to adorn Victorian drawing-rooms that welcomed stuffed birds in glass cases, anti-macassars, and Landseer stags. Views of harbours, beaches, rocks, cliffs would occasionally include a fishing lugger or full-rigged ship, but without any real affection or interest in craft. The great majority of art patrons preferred to investigate waves no more intimately than from the beach at Brighton or Broadstairs. And painters fell in with this attitude, seeing that it was easier to work from solid land than from an inconstant vessel. Others merely took advantage of maritime romance and painted picturesque

mariners ashore, villagers shrimping, a crowd of families waiting anxiously at the end of a pier for the fishing fleet's return; or tackled again those outstanding battles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries though frequently with archæological inexactitudes. Even Millais in 1874, when Sir George Nares was getting ready his Arctic expedition, came under the romance of seafaring and painted his well-known "The North-West Passage," which now hangs in the Tate Gallery. When it was exhibited in the Academy, the motto "It might be done, and England should do it," appeared in the catalogue. But Millais was not a marine artist, and England did not discover the North-West passage. This privilege was reserved for Amundsen the Norwegian, when the little *Gjoa* took him through safely three and a half years after setting forth from Christiania in June 1903.

But right down till the extinction of the clipper ships there were those ardent enthusiasts who could not resist commissioning artists to make them some stirring souvenir of a beloved vessel which had come safely across the ocean time after time. It was in this wise that the trans-Atlantic packets, the whalers, cargo-carriers, collier-brigs, Australian and New Zealand clippers have still remained in portraits. Originally painted to hang on the walls of some Liverpool or London office, or in the dining-room of some cautious old owner who gradually built up a fortune under Victoria's peaceful monarchy, the passage of time has scattered these pictures far and wide. But to-day they are regarded with reverence whenever they fall into the right hands.

Thus in our final chapter we shall see marine painting carried on not necessarily by the most technically perfect painters of the mid-nineteenth century, but by men who were filled with sincere admiration for their subject, and were endowed with special marine knowledge.



H.M. BRIG ACORN. *Painted*
by N. M. CONDY. (*See page 144*).

CHAPTER IX

THE FINAL PHASE

As we look at the following pictures we must try and associate ourselves with the social conditions in which such works of art and such ships were produced : for otherwise we shall fail to appreciate the attitude of those times. They are to us just so far distant nowadays as to seem romantic ; but to the crews these ships suggested everything but romance. Nothing would have given them greater surprise than to know that their floating homes (so often just floating hells) are nowadays spoken of with veneration, and that one such ship at least is being preserved as an exhibition of the old clipper times. In England the Reform Bill of 1832 was for the British people the transition from the last vestige of mediævalism to the sphere of modern thought and wider activity. Before this date the English mind was cramped, and its outlook confined by a narrow sense of political protection, which relied on special privileges. Exclusiveness was the ruling idea, and this penetrated into curious extremes. First of all was that amazing monopoly of the Honourable East India Company, which kept the Oriental trade in its own hands, and kept all commercial adventurers out. The effect of this was to restrict shipping, to prevent healthy competition, restrain trade, and altogether discourage builders from launching improved types of vessels. But from the year 1833 this H.E.I.C. lost their exclusive trading privilege, and went on selling their ships until the end of 1834. The public conscience was now

all against this narrow privilege, and even in 1832 the subject had been raised in Parliament.

Similarly, foreign grain and foreign cattle had been shut out from England; a heavy duty was levied on foreign wool and timber. The British shipowner was protected by a law which allowed no goods to enter the country except in British ships, or with the imposition of heavy duties if carried in foreign bottoms. Artisans were not allowed to emigrate, machinery could not be exported. But, with these restrictions removed, there came a general freedom of movement which was all for the encouragement of shipping, and from 1837 to 1877 followed the period when seamanship and sailing vessels reached the height of their perfection. This was rendered possible for the reason that after the ocean became free for all, and the East India Company had lost its mercantile might, there was a golden opportunity for such men as Green, Wigram, Somes, Dunbar, Baines, and the Smiths of Newcastle to construct a better type of ships for the India and China trade. The flow of emigrants to Australia, the increasing exports, the growth of imports, with the resultant all-round extension of commercial intercourse, gave shipbuilding and overseas voyaging a unique impetus; but in addition there was that immensely important development of shipping activity on the Atlantic which was to draw North America more closely to Europe in general and Great Britain in particular.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century British shipping amounted to a couple of million tons. From the year 1764 to the end of the eighteenth century few British ships were of more than 300 tons. In 1793, when war broke out with France, we possessed 16,079 merchant ships as compared with 3,281 when the eighteenth century began. But now, with all this emancipation of seaborne commerce, there was a great demand for British bottoms to carry

on the work of strengthening relationships with the rest of the world, until at the end of the nineteenth century British shipping had reached nine million tons. Thus we have to think of the maritime industry of those later Victorian years as full of vitality and steady growth, affording so much prosperity that art movements, such, for instance, as that of the pre-Raphaelites, received encouragement, and marine painters were given sufficient patronage to specialize in their own work.

Another influence which exercised itself on shipping, and therefore on painting, was the repeal of the Navigation Laws in 1849. This, again, was a revolution against restriction, and part of the new clear thinking which was coming over every section of English social and industrial activity. In the mid-seventeenth century the Dutch were our great sea rivals, legislation was therefore then made for the purpose of excluding foreign ships from participating in the larger part of our carrying trade. In 1823 this was by Act of Parliament but slightly modified, and the old narrow exclusive Navigation Laws, inspired by animosity towards the van de Veldes' country, continued to regulate British carrying trade and to prevent the natural flow of commerce. But the great repeal of 1849 had the effect of raising British shipping from 4,800,000 tons to 6,000,000 within a quarter of a century.

In 1816 had begun the first regular effort to bridge the Atlantic, when the American packets of the Black Ball Line used to sail from New York to Liverpool in an average voyage of 23 days, and from Liverpool to New York in about 43 days. In 1821 was started the Red Star Line, and in 1836 the Dramatic Line; yet even in the American packets most of the crew were British and often enough the sweepings of English gaols. But the passage to Liverpool was bad enough for any young American sailor to regret bitterly he ever left his parental farm to be led away by the sea.

That old shellback Captain John Whidden, before ending his days, left us vivid details of this unhappy life in a forecastle.

The heavy weather, the bad food, the bullying treatment, the tough shipmates, were enough to damp any young enthusiasm for the seafaring life. How many hundreds of forecastle inhabitants interpreted (though in more violent language) the sentiments of Ralph Waldo Emerson, who remarked of his passage across the Atlantic from Boston in 1847, aboard the packet ship *Washington Irving*, that "I find the sea-life an acquired taste, like that for tomatoes and olives"? Arrived in Liverpool, any fire or light aboard such ships was forbidden by the Docks Regulations, so the crews had no difficulty in yielding to the temptations of the low-down dance-halls of the shore neighbourhood, whilst the captain lived at a local hotel. Deserters were, of course, numerous; the food was bad, the pay an insult, and the entire conditions of life scarcely tolerable. But these ships were nurseries for seamen, and those who survived and stuck to this career often became some of the finest sailing ship masters that the world has ever seen.

Here is a painting by Robert Salmon of the ship *Ann*, that was built at Greenock at the beginning of the nineteenth century and was owned by Messrs. Shanon & Co., of Glasgow and New York. She was of 412 tons, and quite a fine vessel for that date. Nor can the most dignified four-funnelled Atlantic liner of our own time compare with the quiet majesty and stately beauty of such a ship as this predecessor of the steam age. Salmon went to Boston, North America, from England in 1829, where he made a name for himself as a marine artist. He continued his profession in Boston as late as 1840, and his picture of "The Wharves of Boston" now hangs in the old Boston State House. As we look at this *Ann* we can appreciate the almost reverential awe which his contemporaries entertained for these early Atlantic ships. Most of those passengers



THE SHIP ANN, 412 TONS. *Painted*
by R. SALMON. (*See page 150*).



THE BARQUE PEERESS. *Painted*
by R. H. NIBBS. (*See page 151*).

who bade farewell of Britain, to seek new opportunities in America, did so with the full knowledge that they would never return ; and the hard experiences of the voyage confirmed them in the resolution not to go afloat again. Salmon is representative of that school of ship portraiture which was to be encouraged under the conditions previously mentioned. His knowledge of the subject down to the smallest detail was rivalled only by his artistic feeling. The water is conventional and is dismissed by him as a tiresome necessity, but he has exulted in his task of depicting *Ann* as a living creature of beauty.

R. H. Nibbs, who was born about 1816 and died at Brighton as late as 1893, and exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1841, has in the accompanying oil painting given us one of the later nineteenth-century barques. This is the *Peeress*, which was built at Sunderland in 1859 and used to run to Australia. She is shown hove-to making a three-flag signal and riding in an element that looks more like sea than is always indicated. Nibbs did not work entirely along these lines, but did genre subjects and painted in water-colours. There is one of his pictures in the Cape Town Museum, entitled "On the Medway." This *Peeress* is yet another of those definite ship likenesses which were commissioned by persons interested, and Nibbs did quite a number of such contracts.

But next we come to a picture which is of more than ordinary interest. On previous pages we have seen the old Dutch artists painting their whaling ships with a real manifested pride of possession. Now, however, late in time we have a vivid picture of British whalers, done by an unknown artist who had marine knowledge and ability to make ships the sentient beings which they are. Compare also the sea in this example, and observe that it also is real and unbound by any painter's convention. The three vessels represent some of Enderby's famous whalers that

formed one of the most important chapters in the history of this venturesome industry. Most of such vessels were brig-rigged, and two of them are thus seen ; but there is additional interest in the topsail schooner *Sprightly*, to the right of the illustration, for this kind of craft was rare in the whaling trade.

The period is about 1838, a time when the name of Enderby was highly respected by both British and American sailors and shipowners ; for his family had been pioneers in the whaling enterprise. Enderby Island, that desolate district in the Antarctic, still preserves its name, and it was visited in 1831 by the British sailor Captain Biscoe in one of the Enderby firm's ships. Those who are familiar with Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* will remember the chapter where the *Pequod* of Nantucket meets the *Samuel Enderby* whaler of London, and the entertaining descriptions given of the occasion.

"As good luck would have it," Melville wrote, "they had a whale alongside a day or two previous, and the great tackles were still aloft, and the massive curved blubber-hook, now clean and dry, was still attached to the end. This was quickly lowered to Ahab, who at once comprehending it all, slid his solitary thigh into the curve of the hook. . . . Soon he was carefully swung inside the high bulwarks, and gently landed upon the capstan head." . . . "'*Samuel Enderby* is the name of my ship,' interrupted the one-armed captain, addressing Ahab ; 'go on, boy.'"

"She hailed from London," explains Melville, "and was named after the late Samuel Enderby, merchant of that city, the original of the famous whaling house of Enderby & Sons ; a house which in my poor whaleman's opinion, comes not far behind the united royal houses of Tudors and Bourbons, in point of real historical interest" ; and adds the statement that "in 1778, a fine ship, the *Amelia*, fitted out for the express purpose, and at the



BRITISH WHALING SHIPS. *By
an unknown painter. (See page 151.)*



BLACK BALL LINER FIDELIA. *Painted
by an unknown painter. (See page 155.)*

sole charge of the vigorous Enderbys, boldly rounded Cape Horn, and was the first among the nations to lower a whale boat of any sort in the great South Sea. The voyage was a skilful and lucky one ; and returning to her berth with her hold full of the precious sperm, the *Amelia's* example was soon followed by other ships, English and American, and thus the vast Sperm Whale grounds of the Pacific were thrown open. But not content with this good deed, the indefatigable house then bestirred itself : Samuel and all his sons—how many, their mother only knows—and under their immediate auspices, and partly, I think, at their expense, the British Government was induced to send the sloop-of-war *Rattler* on a whaling voyage of discovery into the South Sea. . . . In 1819 the same house fitted out a discovery whale ship of their own, to go on a testing cruise to the remote waters of Japan. That ship—well called the *Syren*—made a noble experimental cruise ; and it was thus that the great Japanese whaling-ground first became generally known. . . . All honour to the Enderbys, therefore, whose house, I think, exists to the present day, though doubtless the original Samuel must long ago have slipped his cable for the great South Sea of the other world.” And Melville was equally enthusiastic of the vessel.

“ The ship named after him was worthy of the honour, being a fast sailer and a noble craft every way. I boarded her once at midnight somewhere off the Patagonian coast, and drank good flip in the forecastle . . . fore and aft, I say, the *Samuel Enderby* was a jolly ship ; of good fare and plenty ; fine flip and strong ; crack fellows all, and capital from boot heels to hatband.” And finally he rounds off with this : “ The abounding good cheer of these English whalers is matter for historical research.”

Melville was writing in 1850—1851 of his own whaling adventures some ten years previously. Now by the year 1849 British

whaling had reached a period of great depression, and only fourteen vessels of that nationality were pursuing the industry. But the greatest living authority on the subject of the southern whaling was Charles Enderby, who was a Fellow of the Royal Society. In 1847 he published a pamphlet on Sir James Clark Ross's data, obtained when in command of the *Erebus* and *Terror* expedition to the Antarctic in 1839—1843. The result of Charles Enderby's efforts was that the Southern Whale Fishery Company was formed, approved by the Government, and sent to the Auckland Islands with a view to reviving the industry. But for various reasons the enterprise failed, there were charges of mismanagement, and the whole thing collapsed. Two of the ships were the *Samuel Enderby*, 395 registered tons, and the *Fancy*, 321 tons, which left England in August 1849, and were followed by the *Brisk*, 265 tons, as well as other ships.

In the picture before us, then, we have an excellent idea of such strongly-built vessels, which used to keep the sea sometimes for as long as three and a half years. Across the globe they would wander, putting into port but rarely and reluctantly for provisions and drinking water. Such occasions were always for the captains anxious ; the crew used for the most part to escape ashore and hide till the whaler had set off again. Not merely were these ships compelled to endure Cape Horn weather and Antarctic cold, but they were floating factories which carried their own accumulated cargo about till they could sail across the ocean home again. Now that the entire whaling of the world is carried on by steamships, and the Enderby tradition is almost forgotten in the successes of the Norwegian and a very few other companies in the Antarctic, this painting of the old-timers is of unusual historical value.

Another unidentified artist, but one of those who made ship portraiture their speciality, has left us the painting of the Black

Ball liner *Fidelia*, which was built by H. W. Webb at New York and used to run to Liverpool in the eighteen-forties. In this American vessel we have a representative crack Atlantic passenger and cargo carrier of the time, and she takes the imagination back to those days when going to sea was a veritable adventure for passengers and crew as well. Often enough the voyage across the Atlantic was wild and stormy, gale following gale, with heavy squalls that knocked terror into the travellers and green hands, yet sent the Liverpool-bound ship scudding under close-reefed topsails and reefed foresail right merrily. But *Fidelia* and her famous Black Ball sisters had been built so strongly that heavy buffeting could be endured even in winter. Then, finally, the coast of Ireland green and welcome would show up ; and later on Holyhead, bright and sunny, with its quaint windmills and dotted with numerous dwellings. The Welsh panorama of scenery burst like a vision of beauty on eyes that had been three weeks and more weary of waves.

The crews who manned these ships were an ill-found lot. The boys who had been lured from happy homes in obedience to the romance of the sea, probably inspired by listening to an old shell-back's yarns, soon found that it was all stern reality. They were kicked about as dogs' bodies, made to do all the drudgery of the forecastle, keep the bread " barge " filled from the steward, bring all the coffee and tea and food from the galley at meal times for the whole watch, sweep up the forecastle after meals, wash it out every morning after breakfast, and generally perform the least romantic duties of all who professed and called themselves sailors.

And then the first day out, when the ship which had seemed in port so steady and stable, now heeled over at a surprising angle, sent the cold spray flying in sheets, made the decks dangerously slippery, whilst on all sides great waves were chasing each other in

apparent eagerness to break on board, and the "old man" began to bellow his orders bad-temperedly, then each young seaman asked himself again why he could have been such a fool to have come out to a life of this sort. The sight from aloft awed him, the sound of the wind whistling in the rigging was like the wail of lost spirits, and then a sudden lurch nearly hurled him to destruction and brought him back to immediate duty. But even on deck it was difficult enough to keep on one's feet; navigation between such adjacent points as the forecastle and poop was done only by making short tacks and then holding on till the ship rolled again.

There was no more child-like creature than the experienced sailor-man of the old school when once he came ashore. Folly and imprudence never combined to make any class more stupidly servile. Badly enough paid, these seamen, who thought nothing of going out along a topsail yard in a howling nor'wester, with snow freezing on their eyebrows, would none the less waste the whole of their wages riotously within a few hours of landing at Liverpool or New York. Their wardrobe was of the slenderest, warm clothing was essential for their very existence; yet they would pawn the lot to assist them further in their dissipation. Lurid language was the rule and not the exception, but there were downright fools and "bad hats" who needed heavy handling, otherwise the work could not have been gone through. And then the discovery of gold in California caused a demand for every ship that could be built, and every man who could haul on a rope; for there was no cross-continent railway, and transportation by wagons and mules was both too slow and too expensive. So the bluff-bowed, square-stern sailing ships had to do the job until there emerged a fine class of clippers which were launched from newly-created shipyards.

Each vessel of this emergency fleet endeavoured to be bigger and more graceful of line than its predecessor, so that during the

period from 1849 to the outbreak of the Civil War in America there was a wonderful revival in that country's shipping. But then came the slump caused by war, the building of railways, cheaper land freights, and the gradual introduction of reliable steamships for the Atlantic. Shipbuilding almost vanished, men and boys preferred any calling other than the sea, captains settled down on land and went into business. The decadence of the sailing-ship era had already set in. Those wonderful days will not be forgotten, however, as long as we have pictures of the old ships, with their tapering spars and frigate-like hulls, to remind us.

We have already mentioned more than one marine artist who got his first inspiration from the ships of Bristol. Now among the natives of that city was Edwin Hayes, who, however, received his artistic education at the Dublin School of Art. Kingstown Bay taught him his perfect knowledge concerning waves, but he painted pictures of such different scenery as Falmouth, Portsmouth, Dordrecht, and so on. Born in 1820, he was made a member of the Royal Hibernian Academy thirty years later, and exhibited in London until the year of his death in 1904. Hayes was thus a connecting link between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. That this artist could interpret waves is well demonstrated by his picture "Sunset at Sea," which was painted from Harlyn Bay, Cornwall, and was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1894, whence it was bought for the Chantrey Collection and now hangs in the Tate Gallery. Here we have the modern British marine school of painting with all its feeling for open air and freedom of treatment, looking at nature from its own standpoint, and not allowing itself to be influenced by any power save sincerity.

To such men as Hayes and John Brett (1830—1902) we are indebted not for ship portraiture, but for that wonderful delight in seascape which they deemed worthy of being painted for its own

great glory. Thus, at length the late nineteenth century produced the exact antithesis of the van de Velde ideals. Where the latter revelled in an exact presentation of hull, spars, rigging, and sails, Hayes and Brett are content to give us vast sea spaces with barely a suggestion of any craft, and everything subdued to the effect of light and clouds on the watery surface. Brett's well-known picture, "From the Dorsetshire Cliffs," and his "Britannia's Realm," both in the Tate Gallery, are striking contrasts to those seventeenth- and eighteenth-century marine practitioners, and are the logical result of the "back to nature" method inaugurated by Gainsborough and Constable. It is, however, generally claimed for Brett that he was one of the upholders of the pre-Raphaelite movement. Certainly his pictures show more than a trace of this early enthusiasm, and year after year he was accustomed to produce beautiful seascapes which were marked by the most searching workmanship, and full of that reverence for nature which was one of the main guides in this school. Henry Moore, who will be mentioned presently, was the other great contemporary marine painter who toiled in accordance with the principles of that long-past brotherhood.

But Brett undertook the enormous task of employing those tenets with regard to seascape and landscape. His minute finish had the effect of suggesting space, which is as difficult a task in painting as it is in literature to create the illusion of time. He achieved his task by covering the surface with an enormous number of little waves, as the novelist endeavours to employ a series of events to impress the reader's feeling of passing happenings. Brett, like van de Velde, used to sketch from aboard a yacht, rapidly and without retouching. He had that ideal ability of a marine artist for seizing a single observation and setting it down at once, before wind and sunlight could change the fleeting perception.



ACTION BETWEEN WASP AND REINDEER.
Painted by EDWIN HAYES. (*See page 159.*)



SHIP OFF GREENWICH. *Painted*
by F. CALVERT. (*See page 164.*)

His pictures have been likened to windows which give out into the wide world of unlimited sunlit sea and sky. There is in them a feeling of unconfined distance through the changing zones of light and shade, such as one becomes so conscious of when seated at the edge of a high cliff looking out over the English Channel on a June day.

Both Hayes and Brett in these seascapes leave little to the imagination: they are records of nature in a certain mood, just as the van de Velde warships are records of definite creations of man. The aim of the two nineteenth-century painters was by immense care and meticulous art to put in every feature of the sea view which was manifest to the keenest vision on a particular occasion. An impressionist would bring the accusation of finicky pedantry against such methods, yet, after those conventionalities which we have watched, can sincerity be regarded in marine painting as anything of a fault? Is not the matter well expressed if we state that such people as Hayes and Brett were among the very first in the whole long history of art to give the sea its due, to paint waves not merely with a pleasing conventional attraction, but as obeying the laws of wind and affected by the sun's rays? It is indeed one of the marvels of human nature that it took all these centuries before the artistic mind woke up to the immense possibilities of this subject.

The example here reproduced of Edwin Hayes is, however, not in his best style, though it emphasizes the fact that his interest was concentrated on a general effect rather than on any real affection for ships themselves. The picture shows the action on June 28, 1814, between the American sloop *Wasp* (Captain Johnston Blakely, U.S.N.) and the British brig-sloop *Reindeer* (Commander William Manners, R.N.), being another of those duel-incidents for which artists found a market. There is little enough feeling in this

painting, but Hayes was obviously handicapped by the fact that the portrayed incident occurred seven years before he was born. Whereas in his "Sunset at Sea" he put down that which was a personal experience, he was compelled in the creation of this naval episode to whip up his imagination and force his mind to conceive. The result speaks for itself.

The incident, of course, belongs to the war of 1812—1815 with the United States. The *Wasp* and *Reindeer* between them brought about one of the bravest displays of sea warfare that well deserves to be commemorated. It is difficult in a picture to suggest all the determination and heroism, yet one feels that something more inspiring might have been depicted if a contemporary artist had been through this fight. The courage, the fine seamanship, the excellent gunnery on both sides, the suspense and big drama were beyond Hayes' mood of the moment, and he has dismissed the affair in a somewhat unimaginative manner.

It was on the first of May, 1814, that *Wasp* set sail from Portsmouth, Virginia, manned by an exceptionally able crew of 173, and having evaded the blockade, as occasionally German ships during the Great War eluded the watchful cordon north of Scotland, *Wasp* got right across the Atlantic and reached the mouth of the English Channel. Here in the very waters where U-boats a century later were to sink British steamers, *Wasp* spent several weeks burning and sinking British sailing ships. But on June 28 appeared in sight H.M.S. *Reindeer*, which carried a crew of 118, and was armed with 24-pdr. carronades. *Reindeer* was an 18-gun ship, whilst *Wasp* was a 22, carrying twenty 32-pdrs. and a couple of long twelves. From the first, then, the contest could hardly be equal, but time would soon settle the result. Dawn saw *Reindeer* sailing towards *Wasp* before the wind, which was light. Hayes rightly has suggested one of those cloudy June days, and it was

not till afternoon that the two contestants were able to draw near to each other. Like eager boxers, each captain was striving to have the weather gage, and then when it was past three o'clock *Reindeer* closed on her enemy's weather quarter, opening fire with her 12-pdr. carronade, which could be moved about as required.

Blakely presently luffed up and replied with his port guns, and this superior armament had terrible effect. Manners was wounded time after time, but not in spirit ; for he gave a magnificent example (such as was to be repeated 102 years later by certain dying destroyer captains at Jutland) of encouraging his men to the very last, whilst playing a losing game. The two ships became nearer still, and then he intentionally ran *Reindeer* alongside *Wasp's* port quarter. Boarding parties were soon over the side as the two ships collided, but Blakely's men repelled them from aft or slew the invaders as they leapt aboard. Manners, in spite of his mortal wound, rallied his people and was about to lead them on again, when one of the Americans in *Wasp's* maintop shot him in the head, and the gallant British commanding officer fell dead on *Reindeer's* deck.

Blakely and his crew had been fighting with equal tenacity and pluck, and now was the chance for *Wasp's* boarders to leap aboard *Reindeer*. The whole series of events had happened with such celerity that in less than twenty minutes from the time when *Wasp* had fired her first broadside, twenty-five British had been killed, forty-two wounded, and their ship had become an American prize. *Wasp*, who did not escape lightly, suffered twenty-six casualties, destroyed *Reindeer* by burning her, and then went into Lorient for a necessary refit. Hayes has indicated the time when the American sloop was to windward on *Reindeer's* starboard side ; when already the smoke of battle at close quarters, and the sickly crashing of hull against hull, had begun to characterize the duel : otherwise Hayes' picture might do for many another single-ship

combat if we were to make merely the slightest modifications in detail.

But, for the reasons mentioned, one prefers to think of Hayes doing such excellent work as that of "Sunset at Sea" previously discussed. And this leads to a consideration of Henry Moore, who was born ten years after Hayes and one year after Brett. These three naturally belong to a separate sub-section, for their attitude to marine subjects was much the same. Henry Moore's period is defined by the dates 1831—1895, and the great appeal of his pictures is that achievement of vast space and wide expanse of the sea, with the emphasis on the varying tones of the water whilst almost ignoring a ship of any kind. Thus the similarity between the members of this trio is complete. But Moore was a great master of painting technique, a splendid colourist, an artist who concealed his art, with an extraordinary ability of introducing light, and a unique skill for employing contrasted tones to attain distance.

In Moore the English school of sea painting, in its literal sense, reaches its highest attainment. Of a fine artistic endowment, sensitive to environment, a faithful student of the sea who went to every trouble in order that this mighty force might be understood; a devotee of the open air, who for a period hesitated between landscape and seascape, until he chose to concentrate on the latter; he possessed a knowledge of waves and their mode of expression which was unique. This intimacy with the sea, this sure touch in expressing his sensitiveness, combined with a clear faith in his own reasonable attitude, brought about an extraordinary verisimilitude on canvas that is the admiration of all who have ever sat down and quietly contemplated the personality of moving waters. His aim was not to tell a story or commemorate a nautical incident, but to employ the Turnerian principles (though not the same methods) of analysing the causes and manner of the ever-changing sea forms,



ROYAL YACHT LEAVING PLYMOUTH.
Painted by W. A. KNELL. (See page 105).



H.M.S. WARRIOR WITH CONVOY.
Painted by W. A. KNELL. (See page 105).

and then present a composition in colour that was every bit true to nature and in accordance especially with atmospheric variations.

Moore, then, by his sincerity and skill, his exhaustive painstaking and devotion to his work, was able to appeal to the man-in-the-gallery as well as the artist-in-the-studio. One has only to think of his famous and popular painting, "Catspaws off the Land," to realize that it is possible for the really great technicians to satisfy all who have a healthy æsthetic sensibility. This picture, of course, hangs in the Tate Gallery and has been reproduced innumerable times, and was purchased for the Chantrey collection in 1885. The luminosity and variety of blues would alone make the greatest enemy of the sea stop and admire. Moore has been criticized for not yielding more to the public taste, who found these "wild wastes of blue waters" oppressive in their loneliness. "One cannot help regretting that he does not more often indulge in the human luxury of a fishing boat," wrote one critic two years after this picture was acquired. But that remark was utterly to misunderstand the painter's objective.

There is no monotony in these vast stretches of sea, reaching out till it unites with the sky. On the contrary, the waves are so multitonous that the eye moves backwards and forwards from wine-coloured effects to emerald green and reflected clouds. Nothing is invented: everything has been observed. The result is sheer truth, selected and rearranged as every work of art must be, yet faithful to open-air nature. He had made himself so familiar with every kind of weather and atmosphere which can affect the sea, that he could scarcely err.

What were his antecedents and training? He came of a family that was essentially art-endowed. Born at York, he had for father William Moore, a well-known painter of portraits, and three brothers who were all artists. One of these was that Albert Moore

whose work is preserved also in the Tate Gallery by the picture entitled " Blossoms," which has been claimed as one of the art classics of the nineteenth century. At the age of twenty-two Henry came to London, and studied at the Academy schools. His first important seascape was seen in 1858, and from then onwards this kind of painting became his speciality. No one has ever paid more whole-hearted attention to the moods of the English Channel, which he depicted with amazing thoroughness and sympathy. He achieved his results, firstly, by many years of cruising thereon, up and down the coast ; and, secondly, by his ability to set down his impressions with great rapidity. And this latter, as we have already stressed, is one of the most important faculties for those who aspire to become great marine painters. Well can we appreciate the reason for those translucent waters in Moore's pictures as we see him wrapped up in rugs on deck studying and noting the relations between wind of gale force and a tidal sea. It cost him effort, it gave him rheumatism, but it won for him personal satisfaction and (somewhat late in his career) recognition from the Royal Academy. Nor is it too much to assert that the few British marine artists of our own day owe a great deal of their success, consciously or otherwise, to this fearless exponent who saw accurately and painted only what he saw.

But the old-fashioned school, who painted ships with Greenwich Hospital as a background, died out only with some obstinacy. Frederick Calvert, who did water-colour paintings and was also an engraver, has left us in the accompanying painting of an outward-bound three-master a view taken of Greenwich from almost that same bit of opposite shore which we have noted more than once as such a favourite with other artists. But in this illustration we have the first shadow of a revolution approaching ; for at the extreme left of the illustration there is coming up the Thames



THE SHIP MORLEY. *Painted*
by W. A. KNELL. (*See page 166.*)



H.M.S. VICTORY. *Painted*
by J. SALMON. (*See page 168.*)

one of those early steamers. And it is characteristic of Calvert's period that whilst he makes this new type of craft merely incidental to the background, it is the sailing ship which merits his chief attention. But artists were not the only people who were unable to read the signs of the times, and fail to realize the great changes which the nineteenth century was to bring about. The great awakening of the 'thirties and 'forties was in effect one of the mightiest revolutions that any nation had so far experienced.

William Adolphus Knell, who was born early in the century and was exhibiting at the Royal Academy from 1855 till 1866, but died in 1875, is another representative of the solid unprogressive Victorian school, who none the less was fond of introducing early steamships into his paintings of Gravesend, Plymouth, and so on. His original work is now very little seen, but Duncan and others used to make plates therefrom. Knell was one of those who could do indifferent, moderate, and really excellent work, just as to-day there are painters who surprise us by their extremes of attainment. Herewith will be found instances of Knell's three moods. In the first we have the somewhat weak painting of the royal steam yacht coming out from Plymouth and a Dutch galleot running in. There is little enough that is noble or inspiring, and it is quite out of keeping with that feeling which distinguished Henry Moore, Hayes, or Brett. But in the second picture there is some improvement in both outlook and technique. This shows H.M.S. *Warrior* protecting a convoy of 315 sail passing the Danish Fort of Reefness. *Warrior* was a famous 74, which did excellent work that century off the French coast blockading Brest, and she was one of Sir Robert Calder's units in his well-known action of July 22, 1805, against the allied French and Spanish. Four years later she was serving at the eastern end of the Mediterranean when Zante, Cephalonia, and some outlying islands surrendered to British

forces commanded by Captain J. W. Spranger of this ship, and Brigadier-General J. Oswald. Knell has certainly given us a spirited picture of this fine old vessel.

One may well wonder at the size of the convoy. Even during the Great War of 1914—1918 the number of steamers under escort sometimes reached as many as thirty odd ; yet on June 9, 1808, a convoy of 70 vessels escorted by four British men-of-war was attacked off Saltholm, that island south-east of Copenhagen, by 25 Danish gunboats during calm weather. But *Warrior's* responsibility was so exceptionally large that it readily suggested to Knell a worth-while subject. The huge fleet is observed spread out in the rear, and surely it was one of the most impressive sights which Reefness ever beheld. The mercantile captains during the Great War used to object strongly to the inconvenience caused by having to steam in such close formation, with the imminence of collision that was not always avoided ; but what shall we imagine were the risks when over three hundred sailing vessels relying on wind alone could be manœuvred in company ? Such an occasion was as severe a test of seamanship as one could ever wish to make.

It is in Knell's fine portrait of the three-master *Morley* that we find of what really first-class work this artist was capable when he liked. This picture was done in the year 1823, and shows a contemporary vessel which for some time was chartered by the Honourable East India Company. The fashion of presenting the subject in three positions is here observed once again, and it is easy to remark that something has been learnt from Turner. But there is a freshness in the whole of this Knell picture, both as regards the *Morley* herself and in the water too. As a contrast with Moore's "lonely sea," Knell has filled his canvas with plenty of action, and a lugger in the foreground prevents any suggestion of the slightest monotony.



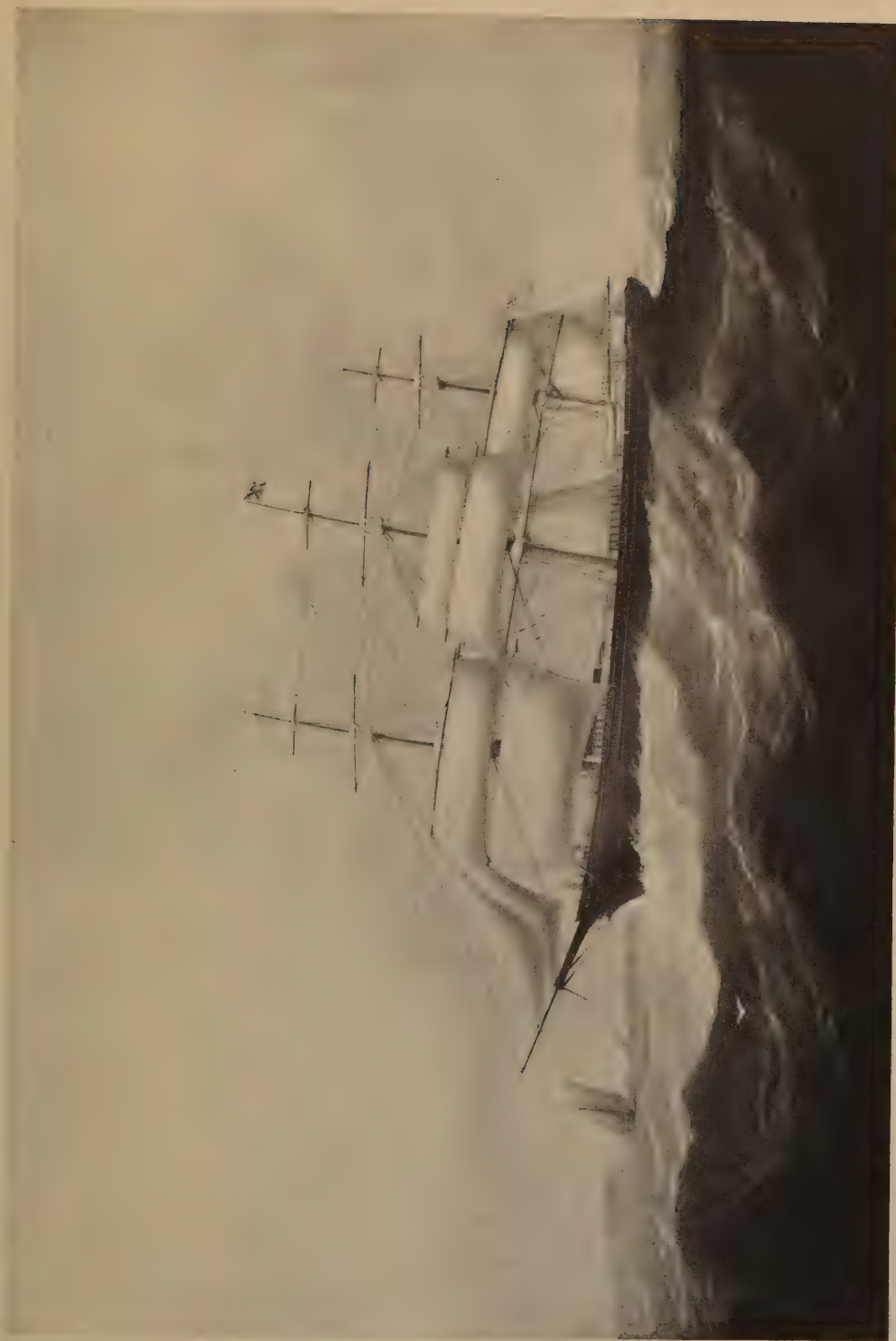
THE FAMOUS YACHT AMERICA.
By a contemporary painter. (See page 172).

But some of these nineteenth-century marine painters were not too well supplied with ideas, and their public too often demanded the same old subjects. Popularity is a dangerous and fickle thing, but so long as it lasts there are great possibilities for those ready to avail themselves. Frankly, at the end of the Great War in 1918, the Royal Navy did not emerge with quite the glory and wild approval that it possessed just after the death of Nelson. His Trafalgar flagship and himself became so closely associated in the national mind that it was impossible to think of one without the other ; and since the great Admiral had passed away at the climax of his career, the British people insisted during the ensuing years on paying honour to H.M.S. *Victory*. It was because Nelson had given the country at least a freedom from anxious suspense that our grandfathers named their sons after him, dressed their children in sailor suits, and had pictures of *Victory* to adorn their rooms. In this manner the Nelson tradition went on with unabated applause until comparatively recently. For nothing is so conducive to the arousing of gratitude as the deliverance from peril. The might of Napoleonic terror had been broken at Trafalgar, and Nelson, writing aboard *Victory* just a fortnight before that battle, when sixteen miles west of Cadiz, realized well enough what the British nation expected. " It is," he wrote, " as Mr. Pitt knows, annihilation that the Country wants, and not merely a splendid Victory of twenty-three to thirty-six—honourable to the parties concerned, but absolutely useless in the extended scale to bring Buonaparte to his marrow-bones."

So the artists at home found themselves with repeated commissions to depict the personification of that annihilating force. They painted *Victory* under way, at anchor, in Portsmouth harbour, or outside at Spithead ; they showed her going into battle, breaking the line of the enemy, and after the fray. Whilst bands and singers

gave recitals of "The Death of Nelson," and the printsellers did a good trade in his portraits, marine artists made their pictures of the ship herself. They are so numerous that one will suffice for our present purpose. In this picture J. Salmon, as late as 1868, has shown her lying in Portsmouth harbour, with that convention in the foreground of a rowing boat which not infrequently gave the title "Recovering an Anchor" to the composition. The coloured frontispiece of this volume shows H.M.S. *Britannia* which, like *Victory*, was a 100-gun ship and served at Trafalgar. Apart from these two, the *Royal Sovereign* (Vice-Admiral Collingwood's flag-ship) was the only vessel on that occasion carrying such an armament. It was in *Britannia* that Rear-Admiral the Earl of Northesk's flag was flown, and she suffered fifty-two casualties on that day as against *Victory's* hundred and fifty-nine.

The name of the artist who painted *Britannia's* portrait is unfortunately not known, but it is a singularly charming bit of work in which the gallant three-decker stands up clear and distinct from the setting of the Mediterranean port. There is in the colouring a lingering influence of the Dutch masters. The revelling riot in blues, which are so significant in modern marine paintings, cannot here be found; the temperamental approach is in no joyous spirit, but with stately tread. In our own lives so many and such vast changes have revolutionized thought and manners that we are apt to forget how deeply ingrained during mid-Victorian times was the virtue of respect, and the instinct for dignity. The ship-of-the-line was regarded with as much wonder, but greater reverence, than we in these iconoclastic days ever think of our huge steel battleships full of death-dealing devices. So the artist has painted *Britannia* with something more than fidelity and delicacy. He has given her space and sufficient loneliness lest her qualities of beauty and stateliness be lost in the general composition.



BLACK CROSS LINER PALESTINE.
By an unidentified contemporary painter. (See page 173).

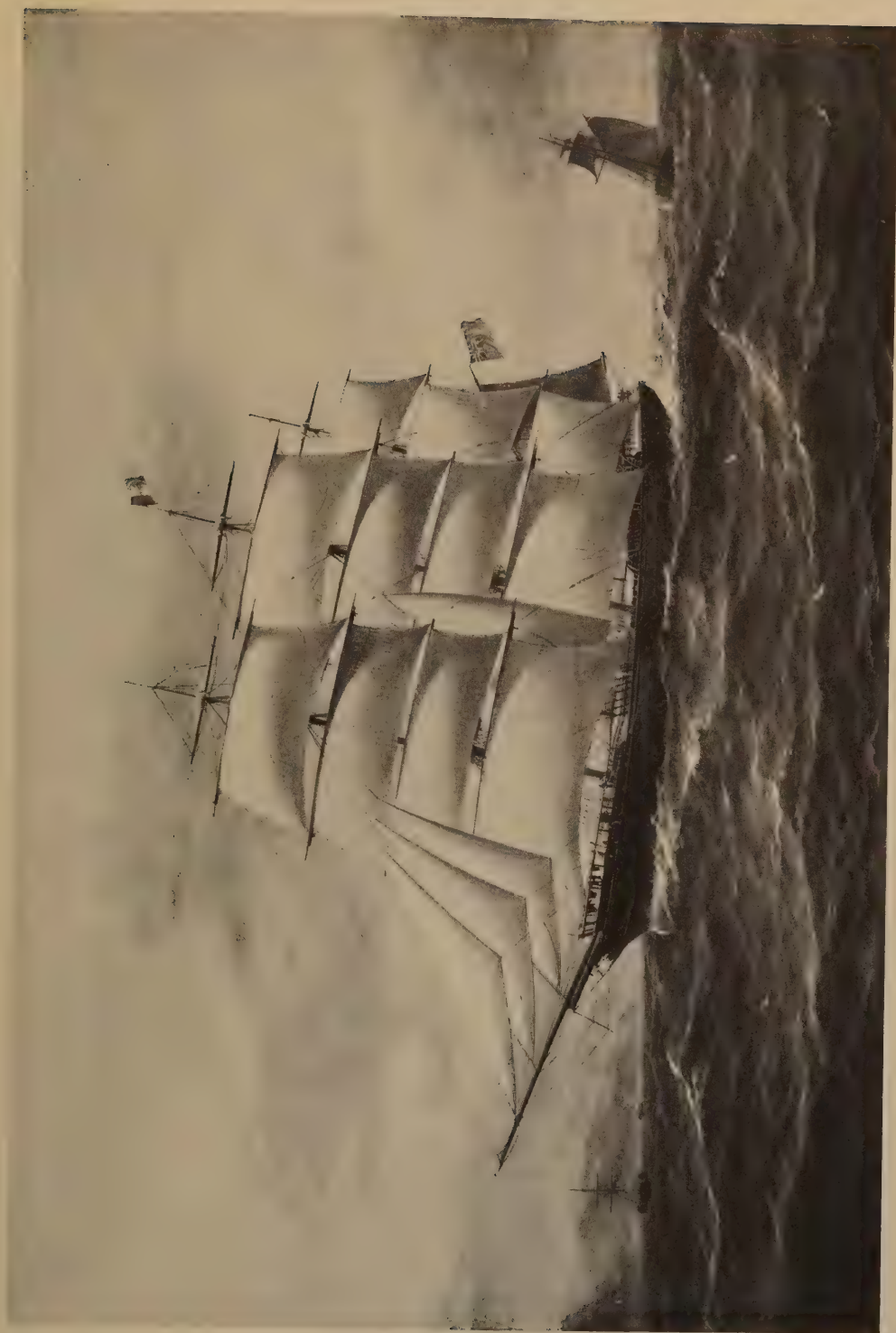
But this matter of variety has always been somewhat of a difficulty to marine painters. It was especially so when the sea bore nothing but sailing ships and rowing boats. The prevalence of the three-masted ship rig, contrasted with only a few brigs and cutters, and the more or less stereotyped appearance of men-of-war, made the painter's task at once easier and more difficult. For a man who wished to avoid himself undue trouble it was easy enough to paint the merchantman in her three positions ; or to show a capital ship, or a two-decker, or a frigate, bowling along with her bellying canvas and ensign flying in the breeze. So long as the artist kept the classes separate, and was ordinarily careful, he had little need of any high conception of his task. One 100-gun ship looked very much like another ; one frigate would frequently pass for any other of her class.

But for a conscientious painter, anxious to infuse some streak of originality into his work, the task demanded considerable ingenious forethought. We shall presently observe the wonderful sameness of the clipper-ship portraiture, but even with those men who did not bother much about ships and concentrated their ability on the sea itself with nothing else except sky and sunlight, there was the ever-present danger of exaggerating or over-emphasis of tones in an effort to be different. Men like Moore could make the experiment and succeed, but the less capable painter was taking on a task for which he was not adequately fitted.

That is why the inferior artist usually contents himself with such commonplace items as fishermen hauling a boat ashore ; a beach with figures ; a rocky coast where the waves dash themselves into spray ; shipping alongside a quay ; a bay scene with plenty of trees, cottages and groups in the foreground ; fishermen hauling a seine net ashore ; women gathering seaweed ; a vessel entering her port between two piers but in charge of a tug, and thus allowing

the artist to avoid the necessity of having to draw the sails correctly. Others again will give you some Cornish harbour with carts, horses, and fishbaskets in the foreground, the fishing-boats far away, and their mastheads cut off sharp at the top of the picture, so that the painting is really not a marine subject at all. The extreme seeker after originality, such as some of the modern French artists, will combine legend and fantasy with the waves, by introducing the Latin love for the human figure—syrens, mermaids, and the like. Other moderns will content themselves by providing a study of just one long wave stretching right across the canvas. There is no ship and little enough sky; but a few white seabirds accentuate the mottled green of the rhythmic sea and there is a deep feeling of irresistible force as the crest comes toppling, crashing over. It is, after all, largely a matter of ability to see, select, and set down, if we forget to mention lack of endowment.

“Art always loses something, or else we should not know it from reality,” wrote Ruskin in 1857; but it also profits by what the painter brings to his task. Over and over again have we noticed in these previous pages that the sailorman, professional or amateur, the dockyard apprentice, and the ardent zealot who went afloat in all weathers, were just those who made sea and ships so real and vital. It was these men, in spite of occasional bad work which even the best sometimes does, who gave to water and hull and ropes and sails character and individuality because of constant hard study. Beach scenes had little call for them when the wide waves were a greater attraction, and the freedom of the seas could be enjoyed. Thus there is no hope of an evasive artist ever prevailing in the sphere of marine art. There is picturesqueness in the fisherfolk on damp glistening quays with chocolate-coloured sails drying in the sun for a background; but neither this nor the whitewashed cottages of the port make the subject a sea-picture,



MARGARET GALBRAITH. *Painted*
by W. CLARK. (See page 174).

or the painter a marine artist. It is not impossible to paint human-interest pictures of the Newlyn School without ever having been afloat in a lifetime. A hopeless dawn breaking into a fisherman's cottage, with the threatening waves and the wind howling outside, does not belong to our category, and has nothing more than an accidental relationship to marine painting. Even certain of those deck-scenes, with figures, often are as suggestive of the studio as some of those "close-ups" which one notices in marine films of the cinema. We observe at once a lack of something real and convincing, so that they fail to satisfy.

The only way to learn the secrets of the sea, and to comprehend its mysteries, is to go afloat and find out at first hand: there are no short-cuts by remaining on land. That is why in Napier Hemy's undulating waters there was always something so undeniably true to life. It is difficult to explain what it is that makes one react to his sunlit waves, unless it is that we compare them with our own experience, and so agree that his interpretation is correct. This artist's life, which began in 1841, was, so to speak, pivoted on the sea. At the age of nine he voyaged as far as Melbourne. On the way back to England some years later the ship was short-handed and he did his trick at the helm. After an hiatus, when his thoughts turned in another direction, he went to sea again, and this roving alternated with his study of art. At first he painted from a rowing-boat, and then he used to cruise about in a yacht that was a floating studio and was always such a familiar object in the neighbourhood of Falmouth. People used to laugh at those great glass windows, but Hemy was right, and he knew that the only way to paint the sea was from the sea itself.

When Napier Hemy was ten years old there sailed across the Atlantic the first American yacht ever to make such a passage in order to race in European waters. Hitherto there had been little

encouragement in America for the building of pleasure vessels, for the new country had been too busily engaged with more serious affairs. It was whilst the clipper period was still strongly influential that it was decided to build a schooner and send her across to race in English waters. Now this was the famous *America*, whose name is for ever associated with the well-known "America" Cup, which still remains to be won back to Britain if ever the chance should occur. In the accompanying painting by an unidentified artist *America* is seen on the starboard tack under foresail and big headsail. This illustration is included for the reason that its subject is the oldest and most historic yacht still afloat. After passing through many vicissitudes and adventures, she was purchased a few years ago by the efforts of some public-spirited yachtsmen and is now at the Naval Academy, Annapolis.

America was really built to represent her nation, and at a time when the New York shipbuilding industry was about at its height. She set sail from New York on June 21, 1851, having a crew of thirteen all told, and crossed the Atlantic with a reduced spread of canvas but with her proper racing spars. The passage was made in the remarkably good time of 20 days, for on July 11 she was fifteen miles S.W. by S. of the Start, having sighted the Scillies that afternoon. She arrived off Havre the same night to wait till morning, and after being refitted went over to Cowes, where she was referred to as a "clipper" and caused no little interest on her arrival.

It was on August 22 of that same year that she won the 100-guinea cup at the Royal Yacht Squadron Regatta, beating all of the other fourteen starters including such crack cutters as *Arrow* and *Alarm*; and on August 28 beat the famous schooner *Titania*. Now from these two memorable races several results followed. Firstly, *America* was to have a very great influence on



WHITE STAR CLIPPER SHIP MERMAID.
Painted by J. SCOTT. (See page 174).

improving the hull and sails of British yachts, but, secondly, there was inaugurated that far-reaching effect of establishing a good relationship between the sportsmen of the two countries, which has continued to this day. Queen Victoria and Prince Consort both went aboard and inspected *America* off Osborne; and there is a yarn still told that the schooner's skipper, named Richard Brown, did not hesitate to request the Prince to wipe his feet on a mat in the cockpit before going down the companion stairs.

She sailed no more races that year, but was sold on September 1 for £5,000 to an Irish peer's heir, thus passed under the British flag, and then went off the same autumn for a long cruise in the Mediterranean. Next year she raced off the Isle of Wight, but in the winter of 1860—1861 she left English waters and crossed the Atlantic. She played the part of blockade runner during the American Civil War, and later on passed through other experiences including that of training ship, though in 1887 she underwent large structural changes which lengthened her from 100 ft. 6 in. over all to another seven feet.

Finally, we have before us four instances of that kind of ship painting which developed as a result of the great interest aroused by the clipper ship in their highest stage of development. The *Palestine* was built in 1854 for the Black Cross Line, and owned in America. This vessel of 1,751 tons carries us back to the time when the little steamers were already struggling to maintain a regular service across the Atlantic in competition with such fine sailing ships. The time is not far distant when other great changes, now merely hinted at, will make *Palestine's* sisters seem as curiously archaic as to-day those one-masted craft of the illuminated manuscripts appear to us.

In this quartette of portraits the artists have set out primarily not to paint the majesty or wonders of waves, but to give a life-like

idea of the ship as she appeared to some other craft at sea. Nevertheless in three of them at least there is such attention paid to the sea's character that the pictures are very much more than glorified photographs. The painter of *Palestine* is not definitely established, but the canvas well indicates to what perfection had this marine technique attained during the second half of the nineteenth century. Such an example proves that between the school which concerns itself only with ships, and that which keeps every craft out of the vast sea expanse, there is a middle category which includes correctly drawn sailor-like ships making their way through waves that are not figments of the imagination.

Still more delightful as a picture is W. Clark's *Margaret Galbraith*, one of Shaw-Saville's fine clipper ships which used to trade with New Zealand. However we approach this portrait it is a work of art, and we have only to compare it with some of those less enlightened efforts of the early eighteenth century to appreciate the considerable advance which had been made. Ship painting and sea painting are here no longer separate arts, but one. Sincerity and feeling for right expression have not brought about freakish pedantry but an increased beauty; so that, in short, *Mary Galbraith* comes ramping along with remarkable nearness to actual life.

I have reproduced here in colour a less noble painting by J. Scott, showing the White Star clipper ship *Mermaid*. Twenty years before the White Star Line entered the Atlantic steam competition they were running their sailing ships to Australia at the time when James Baines' Australian Ball Line was in the same trade. One of the best known among the White Star clippers was the *Red Jacket*, which sailed from Liverpool to Melbourne in 69 days during the year 1854. She was an exceptionally fast vessel, for she had hopped across from New York to Liverpool in a period



ANTARCTIC. Painted by D.
MACFARLANE. (See page 175).

of one hour over thirteen days, and she was so reliable that she used to carry the Australian mail under a guarantee to reach Melbourne in 68 days. She could even beat that by four days, however.

Scott was much employed to do this kind of painting, which is not of the highest class of marine art, and the sea is negligible. A better work is that by D. Macfarlane of the ship *Antarctic*. Intentionally the vessel is rather like a model sent sailing over the water, the aim of the artist being to give something more lively than an architect's plan, yet with greater detail than would be normally found in a sea painting. *Antarctic* was an American ship employed in the New York to Liverpool service, and built by that wonderfully successful Nova Scotian Donald McKay, whose name will be remembered as long as the Atlantic clippers are not forgotten.

Such, then, is the story of marine painting from the earliest times of which we have any record down to that important era when the clipper ships created a special demand for pictures just before the art of photography became fully recognized. It is no part of our subject to deal with living artists of the twentieth century, though a fresh interest was created in sea and ship painting by the Great War. Some, though by no means all, of the pictures under this naval section in the Imperial War Museum will be appreciated in the years to come when ships have reached still further changes in their development. Thanks to the wholesome influences which have been at work, thanks also to greater knowledge of bygone naval architecture and rigging, the standard of marine illustrations nowadays has been vastly improved within the present century. Decorative artists, poster draughtsmen, magazine artists ; etchers of warships, gay regatta scenes, fishing fleets and barques,

now produce examples that rarely have inaccuracies but on the contrary are works of great beauty. And if these marine pictures of all sorts are fewer and better, we can but remind ourselves that even in the past sea painters have been a very small and highly select class. Of these, as we have already noticed, there is a still smaller coterie who, by their patience and devotion, have wrestled with the elements until the sea has yielded up her secrets.

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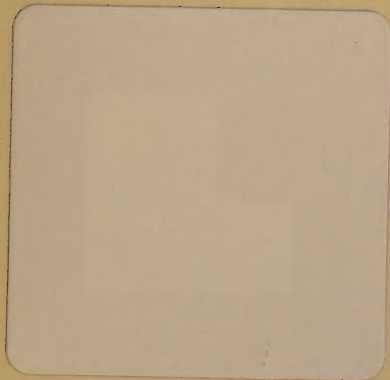
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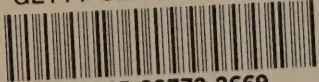
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